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# Dungeon®

ADVENTURES FOR TSR® ROLE-PLAYING GAMES JULY/AUGUST 1989 ISSUE #18

COVER: "Chadranther's Bane" is found at last in Paul Jaquays's cover painting for this larger-than-life adventure.

## Abbreviated Thoughts: The Sequel

While all of the adventures in this issue were written before the AD&D® 2nd Edition *Player's Handbook* became available, we've made minor changes so that they conform more closely to the latest rules. None of these changes should affect the way you play a scenario, and they shouldn't confuse DMs or players of either version of the game.

One of the first things you'll notice in looking through the AD&D 2nd Edition *Player's Handbook* is that the proliferation of character classes has been trimmed back. There are now four *groups* of character classes:

The *warrior* group includes the fighter (F), ranger (R), and paladin (P).

The *priest* group includes the cleric (C) and druid (D). See page 34 of the *Player's Handbook* for a list of the various spheres of influence from which a priest's god can grant spells.

The *rogue* group includes the thief (T) and bard (B). Note that the bard class has been substantially changed from the first edition.

The *wizard* group is handled a bit differently. Generic wizards (formerly called magic-users) are now called mages (M). One specialist wizard, the illusionist (I), gets special mention in the *PHB*. There are many other wizard specialties that can be chosen (necromancer, diviner, conjurer, enchanter, invoker, transmuter, abjurer). If a specialist NPC wizard is encountered in future DUNGEON adventures, his field of expertise will be explained in the text.

The new edition has introduced an additional statistic to the AD&D game: THAC0, which stands for "to hit armor class 0." This statistic, which tells you the number that must be rolled to successfully attack a target with armor class 0, will appear between the number of attacks (#AT) and damage (Dmg) statistics for each NPC and monster.

To conform with the new edition's usage, we've changed the order of NPCs' ability scores. You'll now see them listed as: strength (S), dexterity (D), constitution (C), intelligence (I), wisdom (W), and charisma (Ch). The attribute of comeliness has been dropped, but you may continue to use it, assigning values of your own choice.

And finally, we've added an indication of total party levels along with the recommended levels and numbers of player characters. It's still the DM's job to read the adventure and decide if it suits the party.

This issue's quote was suggested quite a while ago by Christopher Prigge of West Point, New York.

Barbara G. Young


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PUBLISHER: Mike Cook
EDITOR: Barbara G. Young
ASSOCIATE EDITOR: Roger E. Moore
EDITORIAL ASSISTANTS: Robin Jenkins, Kim Walter
ART DIRECTOR: Lori Svikel
CARTOGRAPHER: Diesel
TYPESETTING: Commset, Ltd., Streamwood IL
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Far over the misty mountains cold
To dungeons deep and caverns old
We must away ere break of day
To seek the pale enchanted gold.

Song of the 13 dwarves in Bilbo's home
*The Hobbit*, J. R. R. Tolkien

# LETTERS

## *Clarifications on "The Pit"*

I have a few topics I would like to discuss, but first and foremost, why is there so much treasure in the adventures in DUNGEON Magazine? If characters went through these adventures only, they'd have more wealth than most characters twice their level! While the adventures are quite good, I think that you should reduce the treasure figures.

The guidelines for what type of characters should go through these adventures are also way off: on the average, of the 14 DUNGEON adventures I've played, three characters died in each one. If the players didn't have folders full of characters and kept the same characters over and over, they'd be dead before they reached third level!

I greatly enjoyed reading the adventure "The Pit," by Randal Doering, in issue #17. The Head Priest at the end of the adventure was truly horrifying! Before I use this adventure, however, I have a couple of questions. I was wondering what would happen to a character who was killed by the Head Priest in the first or second round of draining. Would he raise up as a creature identical to the Priest's statistics in that round, or as a skeleton, or a vampire?

Second, how does Thosat, the ghast in area 5, memorize his spells every day if his spell books are gone? Does this mean that he can cast the spells only once each, and then they are gone?

Lastly, is the *Serpin Lexicon* an artifact or just a special spell book?

Toby Myers
Hamilton, New York

*Would you believe we regularly get rid of a lot of treasure in our adventures before they see print? We assume that the adventurers don't automatically acquire all treasure available; they must work for it, and some may die for it (as you know). If a DM still feels there's too much treasure in a module (or too little, for that matter), he can certainly adjust the amount as he sees fit, just as he can change the number and levels of characters who experience the adventure.*

*Randal Doering replies to your questions about his module, "The Pit":*

*"I thought over your questions for a while, and here's how I'd go at them: A character who is killed by the Head Priest in the first three rounds of draining turns into an undead creature with stats similar to the Head Priest's stats in that round, and could become a full vampire by the same process the Head Priest goes through. The newly slain character starts off with one-quarter his former hit points if he was killed by the Head Priest at the skeletal stage, one-third hit points if the PC was killed during the second round of draining, and half hit points if killed during the third or following rounds of draining.*

*"Characters killed by the Head Priest before it becomes a vampire degenerate to the appropriate stage during the round after they are killed and then 'wake up' in the next round and begin attacking. These former characters can go from a one-quarter-hp skeleton to a half-hp vampire, but not more than this until the Head Priest is killed (the PC is a half-strength vampire as described in the* Monster Manual *on page 99). Any character killed by the vampire when it is at full power follows the normal process for becoming a vampire.*

*"Thosat's spells are deity-granted permanent powers. He doesn't need to memorize them and can cast each spell once per day (as noted on page 7 of the adventure). The* Serpin Lexicon *is indeed a special spell book and not an artifact (see the second to last paragraph on page 15 of issue #17.)"*

## *Reader Recommendation*

In response to Kristin Marquardt's letter [issue #16], I'd like to recommend the FORGOTTEN REALMS™ adventure N5 *Under Illefarn* [TSR product #9212]. It's a great 0-3 level module for experts or beginners alike.

I also noticed, on page 3 of issue #16, that there will be an *1898* GENCON® Game Fair (see the fourth paragraph). I found this quite funny. From one DM to the masters, thanks.

Conrad VanDyke
Ann Arbor, Michigan

*We proofread that ad at least three times! There's no truth to the rumor that we'll have a working time machine at this year's GENCON Game Fair.*

## *Readers—2, Editors—0*

I would like to congratulate Randal Doering on writing "Vesicant" [issue #16]. It was suspenseful, thoroughly enjoyable, and fit superbly into my campaign.

I have a question concerning weapon specialization, though. An NPC, Morningdew, described on page 60 of that adventure, was listed as having double specialization with the two-handed sword. According to *Unearthed Arcana*, page 18: "Only melee weapons,

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excluding pole-arms and the two-handed sword, may be used in double specialization." Have I detected an error in the module, or have I missed a rules update somewhere?

Christopher A. Drap
Bad Kreuznach, West Germany

*Author and editors all missed the error Christopher found in "Vesicant." According to the* UA *rules on weapons specialization, Morningdew can't be double specialized with the two-handed sword.*

## *AD&D® 2nd Edition Changes*

I am a new reader who has been playing the [AD&D] game for over one year. I cannot afford the prices of the AD&D 2nd Edition game books. You stated in your March/April issue [#16] that you will be printing 2nd Edition adventures. Will you continue to print 1st edition adventures in your magazine?

Benny J. Bynum
Tacoma, Washington

*Most of the differences between the old and new editions have to do with how you actually play the game, and they shouldn't have too much effect on the adventures we publish. Some NPCs may have spells or powers of different levels or magnitudes than you expect, but this should pose no real problem. The game is under the DM's control and can be changed in any way he sees fit.*

*We're still learning the AD&D 2nd Edition rules ourselves. If a module would be radically changed when played by the earlier rules (which we doubt), we'll give suggestions on how to fix it for the old system.*

*What DUNGEON Adventures provides is just that—adventures. We give you an interesting tale for your PCs to take part in. The game mechanics you use for your particular style of role-playing are up to you.*

## *No Complaints*

Let's get serious. I have been reading through the "Letters" column of DUNGEON® Adventures, finding a heavy load of complaints about the contents of this magazine. But I don't think we are all considering the fact that all magazines aren't perfect. I mean, look at it. In almost every issue you get a long and short scenario (some more often than others), a solo and group adventure, and an occasional comedy as well as many dramatic adventures. Who could ask for more?

And for those of you who think the subscription rate is not all that great, at $18.00 for six issues you're getting an extra issue compared to the newsstand price of $3.75 each. You're saving $4.50!

I must agree with Randal Doering, issue #10. DUNGEON Adventures can usually provide a DM with the module he/she prefers. No, we all can't have the very issue we've wanted. But at least we have got an excellent blend where each issue has something we like.

Dan Patterson
Levant, Maine

*We don't make these letters up, honest!*

## *A Vote for Longer Adventures*

I have been buying your magazine for quite some time now, and I really enjoy it. But like Jim MacKenzie ("Letters," issue #12), I think the adventures should be longer. Scenarios like "The Shrine of Ilsidahur" (issue #10) aren't bad and could fit in pretty well in a campaign, but I prefer ones like "Into the Fire" (issue #1). I liked that one a lot and think that more of your adventures should be long. Some DMs might say that they are too long to play, but why don't they just keep the general idea and make the dungeon shorter? I have been playing AD&D games for five years now, and when I use one of your adventures, I like it to last the whole afternoon and not just an hour.

Benjamin Freud
Paris, France

## *The Balancing Act*

I recently ran several people through "The Moor-Tomb Map" from issue 13. It was well balanced with traps, hack'n slash, and "thinky stuff." We enjoyed this balance very much and would like to see it more often. If certain groups only like hack scenarios, it is fairly easy to not use the trap and thinky items. But, for players with limited time, it is not as easy to whip up intelligent traps and clues.

Eric J. Watkins
Fernandina Beach, Florida

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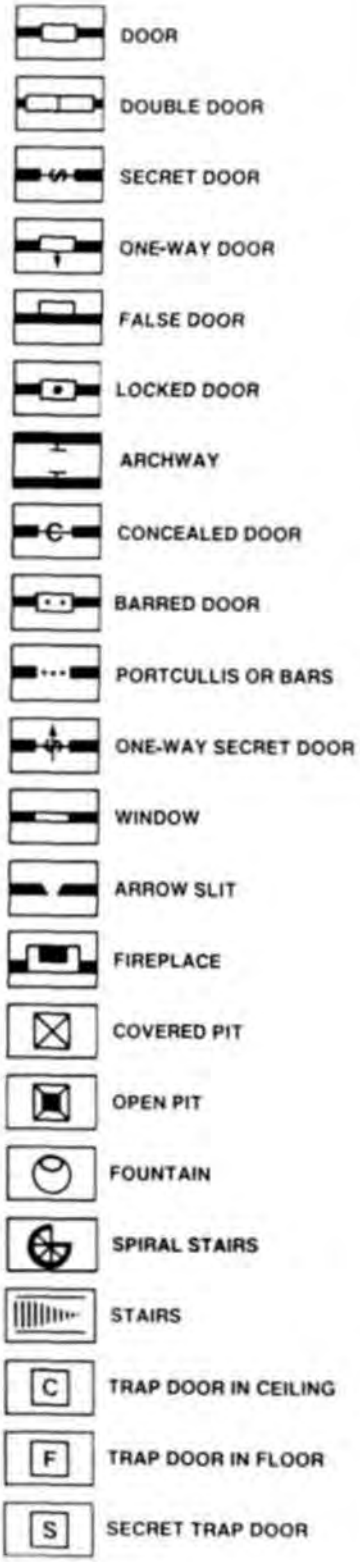
# MAP SYMBOLS

These symbols are used on most maps in DUNGEON® Adventures.



# IRONGARD

BY ED GREENWOOD

## There's no tomb like home.

Artwork by Eric Hotz

*Ed Greenwood is the creator of the FORGOTTEN REALMS™ fantasy setting which he has been working on for over 20 years. Ed lives in Canada and has written the novel* Spellfire, *and many other TSR products.*

"Irongard" is an AD&D adventure for 4-6 characters of 1st-3rd level (about 10 total PC levels). Zero-level PCs (as per *GREYHAWK® Adventures)* may be used if supported by more powerful PCs. A PC wizard is essential, and a well-balanced party is recommended. If most PCs are weak or if one of the four basic classes is not represented, increase the party by one or two NPCs, perhaps hirelings.

This module is set in the Forgotten Realms, on the continent of Faerun. The adventure may begin anywhere, but the dungeon itself is located just north of the kingdom of Cormyr, somewhere in the Stonelands. If desired, "Irongard" can be set in a temperate wilderness region of any campaign world. The DM should become familiar with the adventure before using it and should consider the effects on his campaign of introducing the treasures included herein.

### An Unpleasant Encounter

This scene can occur at any marketplace or other open gathering of people at which a PC wizard is present. At some point, the PC notices an old, scraggly bearded man in a well-worn gray cloak and robes sitting on a shabby leather pack. The old man glares back, mumbles a few words, then suddenly vanishes into thin air, leaving the pack behind.

Regardless of the PC's actions regarding the pack, the old man reappears two rounds later at the PC's elbow and grabs for the PC's arm, angrily shouting "My magic! Steal my Art, would you? You, too, deserve the Curse!" The old man must either make a to-hit roll to grab the PC and bestow his *curse* (as detailed in the following section) or may automatically make his to-hit roll at the DM's discretion. The latter is recommended to get the adventure started.

The old man then stamps angrily back to his pack and mumbles again, and both he and his belongings promptly vanish—this time for good. However, a split in the pack's aging seams has allowed a wooden box to slip out and remain behind when the old man *teleports* away.

Inside the box are four steel vials, stoppered and sealed with wax. They are

potions of *healing* of an unusual formula. Anyone imbibing either of them is indeed healed of the usual 4-10 hp damage but also radiates an electric-blue *faerie fire* radiance for 2-8 turns.

The old man is Mad Meerim, a local character who has been seen at this spot from time to time before. No one nearby knows him well or can speak of his origins, class, or past.

**Mad Meerim:** AC 4; MV 12; Wiz 12; hp 40, #AT 1; THAC0 17; Dmg by weapon type (currently unarmed); S 17, D 16, C 16, I 18, W 6, Ch 7; AL CN. Mad Meerim is insane with paranoia and is immune to psionic attacks as a result. For the most part, his insanity does not interfere with his day-to-day life, though incidents such as the above have been occurring more frequently as his madness progresses. At the time of this encounter, Mad Meerim has only two *teleport* spells and his *curse* left.

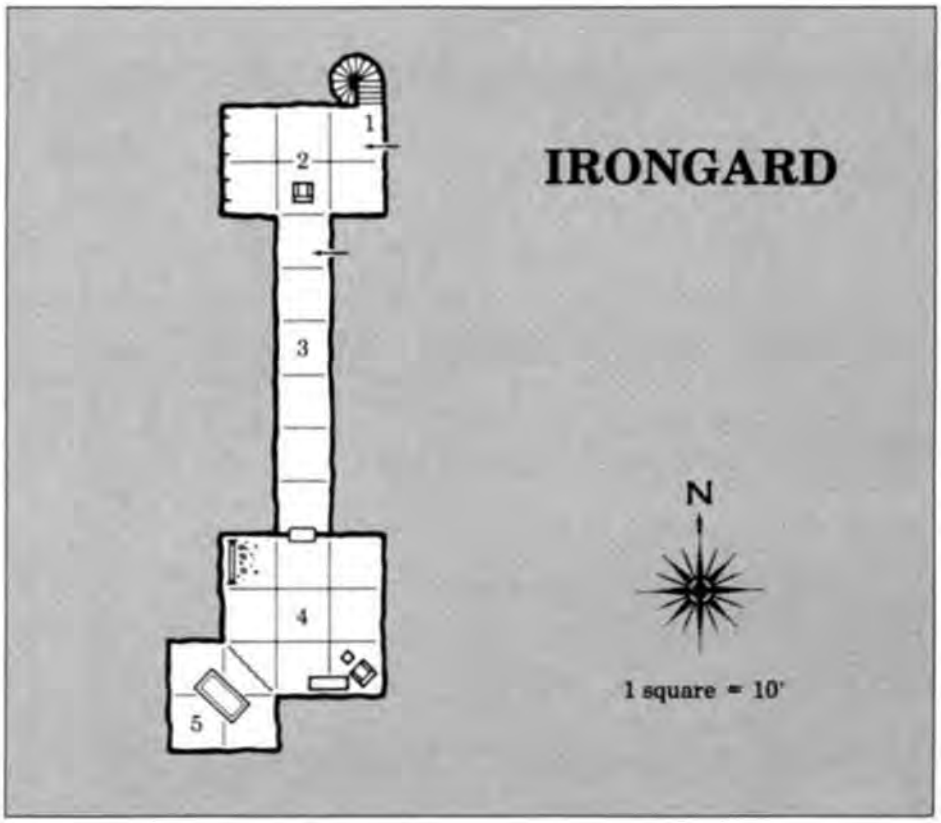
Before his abrupt departure, the old man ignores any PC attacks or queries. He is simultaneously protected by *armor, protection from normal missiles, shield,* and *stoneskin* spells, as well as a wizard's version of *resist fire*. He acts as if attacks against him never occurred, not even pausing in his words or actions. The DM may rule that Mad Meerim is immune to other attacks, if he wishes to make the old man more mysterious and to use him in later encounters. Mad Meerim is dangerous and highly unpredictable.

If Meerim is brought to 6 hp or less by physical attacks, he instantly *teleports* away regardless of constraints upon him. Spell-casting on his part is not necessary; a *contingency* spell does the work.

The moment Meerim grabs the PC's arm, the PC feels an unpleasant tingling there, and a yellow fog clouds his vision. Worse yet, one of his memorized spells (determined at random) is instantly lost. Meerim has bestowed the *curse of forgetfulness*, a spell devised by the mage Iyarim, Meerim's long-time master.

The PC will feel ill at ease until the *curse* is removed. This *curse* destroys the ability to comprehend and memorize spells. The PC's forgotten spell is gone forever; memorization of that particular spell will never be successful again until the *curse* is lifted. Ten days after the encounter, the understanding of another spell will be lost. Ten days later, yet another spell will be lost, and so on.

Memorized spells are always the first affected, but a spell need not be held in memory to be lost to the victim's future comprehension. The *curse of forgetfulness* is unaffected by *remove curse* spells (see end of adventure for more details). Something must be done!




## The Tale of Iyarim

Any sage or spell-caster the PCs question will recognize the *curse* by its symptoms. For a fee (whatever the DM wishes to charge), such an individual will reveal that the *curse of forgetfulness* is the most infamous spell developed by the bad-tempered, eccentric mage Iyarim. It is a reversible spell, and its secrets are known to very few. These few certainly include Iyarim and his apprentices Meerim, Unglath, and Ahrshar.

Iyarim traveled extensively in the many planes of existence and is said to have acquired and developed rare and strange spells as a result of his journeys. He took as his abode an ancient tomb in the Stonelands just north of Cormyr, a few rooms beneath the black stone statue of an armored warrior, and lived there until his death 30 years ago. The place is known as Irongard (a corruption of "Iyarim's Guard").

Local folk in northern Cormyr know the rough location of the black statue and will readily speak of it. Many other Cormyreans know of it but can say only that it lies "somewhere in the Stonelands."

## The Black Statue

The PCs can readily find the 12'-tall statue of a helmed warrior with a raised shield and broad sword atop a grassy hill. Time has worn away most of the statue's face and blade, and has erased its origin from living memory and lore.

A heavy, 11'-square slab of the same black stone as the statue lies in the tall grass at the statue's feet. If the slab is dragged aside (a combined strength total of 22 is required), a circular shaft 10' across is revealed. Filling the shaft is a steep circular stone staircase. A faint amber glow comes up from the depths, but the subterranean area is otherwise dark and silent. Musty but breathable air drifts out of the shaft.

**1. The Spiral Staircase.** This enchanted staircase has 60 steps and is very steep, twisting sharply as it descends. An armed and armored PC

requires a minimum of three rounds to climb down it. Random "trip steps" suddenly rise a foot or so upward, triggered by weight upon adjacent steps. All the steps are so enspelled, so that marking or avoiding known trip steps will do no good, although a *dispel magic* spell cast on the staircase will cause all the steps to remain dormant for 20 turns.

At the end of each round, every PC on the staircase must make a dexterity check to avoid tripping and falling, suffering 1-2 hp damage. At the DM's option, breakable objects carried may have to make saving throws at each fall. Noise on the stairs will not cause any disturbance in the areas below.

**2. Outer Chamber.** At the bottom of the staircase is a 20'×30' room with a corridor opening in the center of its far wall. The corridor and the room are walled, roofed, and floored with large, smooth-dressed blocks of stone. An amber light is coming from the far end of the corridor, about 60' distant. The ceiling of this room is 20' high.

Facing the PCs, in front of the corridor opening, is a massive, high-backed stone chair. A skeleton in rotting robes is seated upon it, clutching a staff across its knees. The staff is nonmagical, and the skeleton is merely human remains, not undead or any sort of monster or animated guardian.

This is all that is left of Iyarim, but the PCs will not be able to learn anything useful by speaking to his bones via magic. Iyarim was quite insane when he died. The DM can, of course, use Iyarim's ravings to give the PCs leads to other adventures.

As the PCs examine the stone chair and skeleton, a dagger, flying by itself, flashes out of a hand-size gap between two stone blocks, high up on the east wall of the room. The *flying dagger* darts point first and attacks the PCs immediately, pursuing them throughout the dungeon until all are slain or have escaped. It will not pursue beyond the top of the spiral stair (area 1) but will attack any being entering Irongard thereafter (*flying daggers* are fully described at the end of this adventure).

Deep in the hole is a second *flying dagger* that will animate only if disturbed. There is nothing else in the cavity (unless the DM wishes to place a key or a map or other item leading to further adventures therein).

On the western wall of the room, at shoulder height for a human adult, is a row of wooden pegs. From these hang rotting, wispy cloaks, scarves, and caps—and a plain metal helm. The helm is not rusty and radiates a dweomer.

It is a *helm +1* usable only by clerics and fighters. If worn by any other class, it suddenly "grows" a solid metal plate across its open front (i.e., across the wearer's face) whenever the wearer casts a spell or activates a magical item. This spoils magical attacks requiring vision for aiming, spell-casting gestures, and the like. (The plate actually phases in from the Ethereal plane; its appearance cannot be magically or physically prevented by any presently known means.) The helm confers upon the wearer a +1 bonus to all saving throws and applies a –1 penalty to all dice of damage caused by normal or magical fire.

The stone seat or throne is of the same rare black stone as the statue at the entrance to Irongard. No magical dweomers of any sort can be detected through this stone (an extremely tough, durable form of obsidian enspelled long ago in the now-vanished Northern realm of Netheril), so the throne utterly conceals the treasure hidden beneath it.

A total of 30 strength points is required to move the throne. Pushing it a foot to either side reveals a shallow niche in the floor. This niche contains three bone tubes (actually hollowed-out dragon wing bones), each containing a roll of parchment. One is a *write* spell scroll, one contains the *curse of forgetfulness* spell (and its reversed form, *bestow remembrance),* and one contains the words "Archinon," "Zabbalas," and "Zoun," written in Thorass (Auld Common). These are the command words activating Iyarim's *wand of illumination, wand of negation,* and *wand of wonder* respectively, but there is nothing to tell any reader this. These three wands can be found in rooms 4 and 5.

**3. The Corridor.** The 10'-wide, 60'-long corridor opening off the outer chamber (area 2) has a 20'-high ceiling. It is dominated, at its far end, by a stone door adorned with a relief carving of a laughing human face. The eyes and mouth of this carving are dark holes (actually spyholes from the chamber beyond the door). An amber *faerie fire* radiance has been cast on the north side of the door, but it is neither locked nor trapped.

A hand-size gap between two blocks of stone, 10' up on the east wall of the corridor, 10' south of the outer chamber, is the resting place of another *flying dagger.* This dagger attacks immediately if touched. Otherwise, it animates only after the carved door has been touched, floating silently out of its hole to attack anyone leaving Irongard. This dagger will not pursue intruders into the inner chamber (area 4) or the innermost chamber (area 5).

**4. The Inner Chamber.** A heavy curtain hangs diagonally across the southwest corner or this room. On the west wall is the man-high frame of a shattered mirror. The glass shards on the floor radiate a faint dweomer, but this former *gate* is now beyond repair.

Clustered in the southeast corner of the room are a table, a footstool, and an easy chair. All are old and well worn but sturdy, fashioned of shadowtop wood (see DRAGON® issue #125, "Woodlands of the Realms"). On the table are a large locked iron chest and a book. A battered pair of leather walking boots lies on the floor beside the footstool.

The chest radiates a dweomer. Its key is missing, and it will have to be picked or forced open. When the lid is lifted, the magic within (a *Phezult's sleep of ages* spell; see the *DM's Sourcebook of the Realms,* page 52, in the FORGOTTEN REALMS boxed campaign set) is discharged, releasing a hungry stirge from *stasis* to attack the PCs. There is nothing else in the chest.

**Stirge:** AC 8; MV 3/18; HD 1+1; hp 9; #AT 1; THAC0 19; Dmg 1-3; SA blood drain; AL N; MM1/92.

The book is an inventory of alchemical ingredients (such as "three displacer beast tentacles in brine, good condition; eight anhkheg mandibles in oil, somewhat damaged . . .") that are stored elsewhere, if indeed they still exist. Stuck into the book as a bookmark is a scroll containing the spell *ray of enfeeblement.*

The boots radiate the faint dweomer of preservative magicks that prevent rotting or tearing of the leather. The left boot heel pulls out to reveal a wicked little dagger blade sheathed in the sole. A spell has been cast on this otherwise normal dagger. The first time (only) that the blade touches metal (e.g., chains, a lock, armor), its touch has the same effect as the antennae of a living rust monster (see MM1/83).

Strapped to the underside of the chair is a foot-long tapering stick of wood. This is an unlabeled *wand of illumination* with only six charges left. The wand bears no identifying rune or inscription.

**5. The Innermost Chamber.** Beyond the curtain is an adjoining room that contains only a massive stone casket. A total of 17 strength points is required to lift its lid; 26 strength points are required to move the casket itself.

When the casket is touched, a *magic mouth* appears on its lid and shouts, "Thieves and despoilers! You have made an enemy who will bring doom upon you all! Know—and fear—Iyarim! I will find you all—soon!" (It is up to the DM to decide if this is more than an empty threat. Iyarim could well have set the triggering of this *magic mouth* to alert a colleague waiting in some later dungeon to challenge the PCs when they've grown in power. In the meantime, such a henchman could be capable of sending various animated items and monsters (golems and *flying daggers*, for example) to attack and rob the PCs.

The casket is not locked or trapped, but it contains another *flying dagger* that attacks immediately. The dagger pursues the PCs until it is destroyed, even outside the dungeon.

Inside the casket is a jumble of Iyarim's belongings. Two old (nonmagical) cloaks, a hat, and two (normal) daggers lie on top of the pile. Beneath these are a carved ivory box (worth 1 gp), five steel vials, a long cedar box, and a staff.

The ivory box contains a brass ring wrapped in rotting silk. The ring has no magical powers (it was one of Iyarim's incomplete projects). Four of the vials, stoppered and sealed with wax, are potions of *healing*. The fifth vial, marked with a red paint stripe, is a potion of *gaseous form*. The unlocked cedar box contains a foot-long, tapering stick of wood: a *wand of wonder* with 17 charges left. The stick bears no rune or inscription.

The staff is magical. When grasped, it produces the effects of a *feather fall* spell for the holder only. The bearer can also will the staff to radiate *light*, but it has no other powers (Iyarim left it unfinished). It is considered a magical weapon for purposes of what it can hit, but has no to-hit or damage bonuses.

If the casket is moved aside, the niche beneath it will be revealed. This storage space contains a *wand of negation*, with four charges left.

## Concluding the Adventure

PCs attempting to leave the underground rooms face a waiting *flying dagger* in the corridor (area 3), and one or two more in the outer chamber (area 2; the second dagger in the hole will emerge to prevent intruders leaving if it was not animated earlier). Even if the PCs successfully neutralize the daggers, they must still face the trip steps again (area 1).

About two "rides" (20 days) after the PCs leave Irongard behind, they should hear the following news in a tavern or as caravan gossip: Old Mad Meerim showed up in Arabel (or somewhere else, if the PCs *are* in Arabel) howling that someone "desecrated Irongard" and ranting that "the black statue will hunt!"

It is up to the DM to decide what form Meerim's revenge on the PCs will take, or if indeed he will ever find them. A closely pursuing mage may well prove a good impetus for PC adventures. The whereabouts of Iyarim's two other apprentices, Unglath and Ahrshar, are likewise left to the DM. Perhaps Iyarim cloned himself before dying, as well!

### *The Curse of Forgetfulness*

(Enchantment/Charm) Reversible

Level: 7
Range: Touch
Components: V, S
Duration: Permanent
Casting Time: 2 segments
Area of Effect: One creature
Saving Throw: None

By means of this spell, a wizard bestows a special *curse* on another wizard or illusionist that destroys the ability to comprehend certain spells. Lost spells cannot be memorized or even cast from a scroll; the mind of the victim of this *curse* simply cannot understand and enact them.

Spells known to the victim are lost at random, beginning with those spells currently memorized. One spell is lost instantly upon application of the *curse*. One additional spell is lost every 10 days thereafter until the victim forever loses all spell-casting ability. A *remove curse* spell will not affect this *curse*; a *limited wish*, *wish*, or *alter reality* spell is necessary.

The reverse of this spell, *bestow remembrance*, reverses the effects of a *curse of forgetfulness* or a *forget* spell. Imbibing an undiluted potion of *sweet water* will halt but not reverse the effects of a *curse of forgetfulness*. A successful to-hit roll is required to confer either version of this spell upon an unwilling being.

### *Flying Dagger*

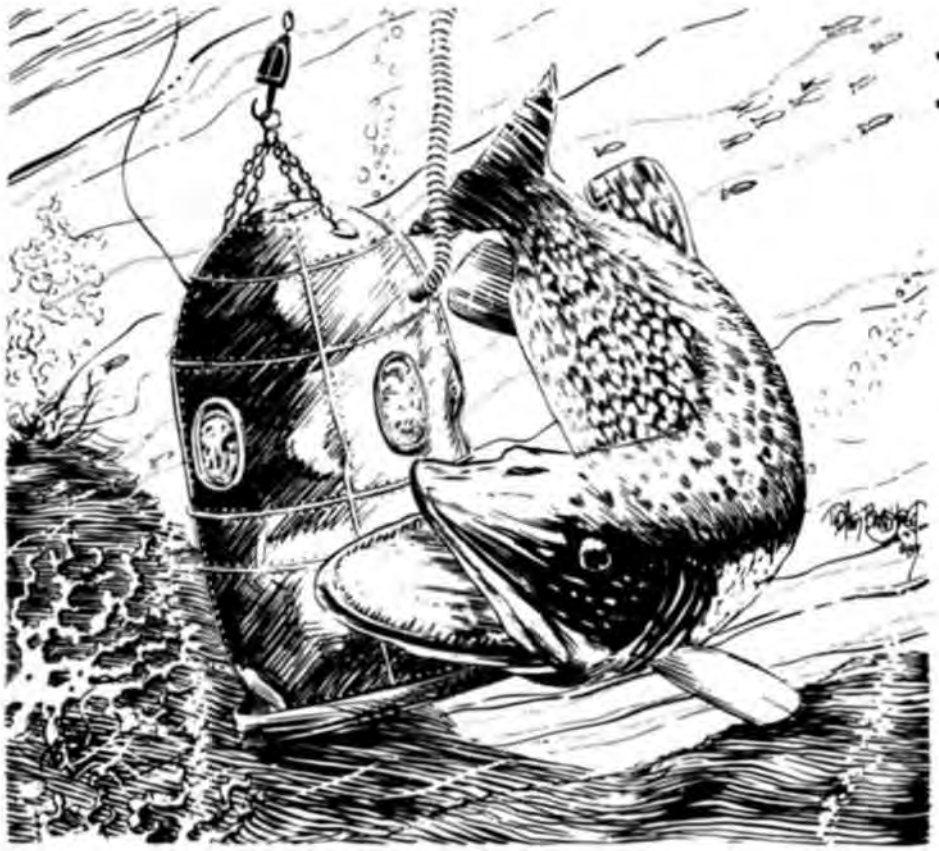
A *flying dagger* darts about silently, point first, and is typically about 9" in length. One to twelve such daggers are usually encountered. This useful magical item was very popular as an animated guardian in past days of the Forgotten Realms. Many different specimens can still be found (so the DM can freely alter the statistics of an individual *flying dagger*). The secrets of magically animating daggers are known to few living mages.

An average *flying dagger* has an armor class of 5, a movement rating of 24 at maneuverability class A, and 1+1 hit dice. It attacks three times per round, striking as a 3-HD monster and doing 1-4 hp damage per strike (1-3 vs. large-size opponents). Such a dagger is considered a magical weapon for to-hit purposes.

*Flying daggers* are neutral, nonintelligent, and cannot be affected by psionic or magical mental control. A *dispel magic* spell cast on one of these daggers causes it to become inanimate and harmless for 20 turns.

*Flying daggers* are usually enchanted to attack anything within 60' that moves. The spells that cause such daggers to swoop, dart, and detect opponents also prevent rusting and brittleness resulting from extreme heat and cold. The activation conditions for a given dagger can be as general as "attack all intruders" or as specific as the most elaborate triggering conditions of a *magic mouth* spell.

Some *flying daggers* (not Iyarim's) can reflect or are immune to certain spells. Instead, Iyarim's *flying daggers* have a special ability; their touch can rust metal items as a rust monster's antennae do. Items struck must save vs. lightning or rust. (A *flying dagger* strikes metal when it is attacking a target creature carrying or wearing something metal, and its to-hit roll misses by only one, two, or three points.) Iyarim's daggers all have 9 hp. Ω



# WHITELAKE MINE

BY WILLIE WALSH

## A little fishing trip–with you as the bait!

Artwork by Tim Bradstreet

*Willie writes: "I like sending new ideas to DUNGEON® Adventures, but because I live in Ireland, I don't always get feedback on how the adventures are received." If you'd like to comment directly to Willie on this or any of his work, send a letter with an International Reply Coupon to him at 30 Aongus Lawn, Tallaght, Dublin 24, Republic of Ireland.*

"Whitelake Mine" is an AD&D® adventure designed for a group of 3-6 characters of levels 2-4 (about 14 total PC levels). The PC group should include a wide selection of character races and classes to increase the likelihood of success. Player characters may be of any alignment, although it would be preferable if they favored good over evil. This adventure may be used for a single game or, with minor adjustments, as an inclusion in an ongoing campaign. It is assumed that a major body of water, preferably a huge lake or ocean, lies within 20 miles of the Whitelake district.

The DM should familiarize himself with the complete text of this adventure prior to commencing play. Apart from the obvious advantages of understanding encounter situations, a careful study will also familiarize the DM with the personalities and motives of the distinct nonplayer characters present.

### Adventure Background

Gnomes first settled in the district of Whitelake one thousand years before the time of this adventure. They built their homes in the craggy hills south of the lake from which the district gets its name, and named their town Postern.

Postern was built on two levels. The upper works were buildings more suited to the tastes of surface dwellers, with whom the gnomes had extensive dealings. The lower reaches of Postern, its mines and workshops, were delved into the rock itself. These areas became, and continue to be, places of continuous industry, exploration, and experiment.

The chief instigator of one recent experiment is a gnomish engineer named Kilinin. Born in Postern, he directed his talents toward invention rather than the more physical labor in the mines. Unfortunately, as is sometimes the case among inventors, his products seldom caught on, or even merited the time and effort put into their design and execution. Postern's Miners' Guild was beginning to despair of ever

getting a return for the money they had invested in Kilinin.

At least, that was the consensus until lately. Kilinin has at last produced what may be his overdue claim to fame: a device for descending to (and returning from) the bed of the nearby lake.

The inventor called his device the *Postern-1*, and he even found a means of justifying its expense. When he conducted trials with the device in the deepest section of the lake, he discovered a large vein of gemstones that might otherwise have gone unnoticed. Now the *Postern-1*, a form of diving bell, regularly descends to the lake bed with a crew to mine the precious stones for the benefit of the town.

Naturally, Kilinin was delighted that his latest invention had proven so successful—but one day, things began to happen that caused grave concern for the future of the project.

## For the Dungeon Master

The gemstones, mainly forms of agates (carnelians, chalcedony, and sard; see the AD&D 1st Edition *Dungeon Masters Guide*, pages 25-27), were pushed up through the overlying rock when natural earth movements formed the district. The lake itself is a depression, acting as a collector for water running off the surrounding hills. Unknown to the gnomes, however, the forces that pushed the lake bed upward did so unevenly, creating almost undetectable cavities slightly north of the lake.

Kilinin's diving crew members were recently the victims of attacks from a giant pike, a creature previously not known to inhabit the lake. In fact, the monster has been introduced deliberately, as the secret caves near the lake have been colonized by a group of aquatic ogres (merrows) who fear discovery and possible destruction at the hands of the gnomes. Though no gnomes have been eaten by the giant pike, several have been badly bitten, and only a few will now brave the dangers of the "Whitelake Mine."

The gnomes are only concerned that they can't manage the difficult job of mining the gems with the pike around, so there's talk of forgetting about the whole operation for reasons of safety. Poisoning the lake has been ruled out, as such a drastic solution to the problem would destroy the ecological balance of the entire area. The gnomes have little experience with hunting or fighting, and so have nobody willing to tackle the job of eliminating the pike.

Kilinin isn't happy with talk of quitting, so he's offering the sum of 1,500 gp or its equivalent in gems to anyone who can remove or destroy the monster. So far, there have been no takers.

Not one to give up easily, Kilinin has begun actively looking for a small group of adventurers he can persuade to help the town. To this end, Kilinin often visits the Saddler's Arms Inn, a hostel frequented by travelers, hoping to contact a likely party.

## For the Player Characters

When the PCs are in Postern on business, or just passing through, read the following to the players. If you prefer, you may role-play the situation with Virtrite instead of reading the prepared text.

> The Saddler's Arms is as good a place as any to stop over while journeying through the district of Whitelake. The inn's good food and drink are served by an amiable innkeeper named Virtrite, who happens to be a gnome.
>
> Fearing that he may overstep the bounds of hospitality, Virtrite is hesitant to bring up the subject of employment with you. After several false starts full of hemming and hawing, he says he knows a gnome named Kilinin who would like to speak to you about a matter of adventuring. Virtrite hints that there could be good money involved and asks if you're interested in allowing Kilinin to join you at your table.

**Virtrite:** AC 10; MV 6; zero level; hp 6; #AT 1; THAC0 20; Dmg by weapon type (he keeps a club behind the bar); SA/SD see the AD&D 2nd Edition *Player's Handbook*, page 22; AL LG; ability scores unremarkable; MM1/46.

Except where noted, any other gnomes the PCs encounter in the course of this adventure also conform to the above statistics.

The innkeeper is a nervous gnome, always on the go around the inn, ensuring that all of his many customers are happy. He is quiet for all that, and slow to approach strangers unless it's important. Well-liked and dependable, Virtrite has plenty of friends among the clientele of the Saddler's Arms who will come to his aid if the PCs decide to give him any serious trouble.

Kilinin is a different type of character entirely. If the PCs allow the gnome to join them, he launches into a fast-paced explanation of the inconvenience of trying to mine the lake bed with the pike around, assuming that once the PCs have agreed to speak with him, they must also have agreed to work for him. He continues talking at a rapid-fire pace about Whitelake, the *Postern-1*, the fish, the mine, etc. until someone interrupts him with a question. Kilinin then looks blankly at the wall before answering, resuming his fast talk about the lake immediately thereafter.

If the PCs agree to take on the job of removing the monster from the lake, Kilinin tells them that they must make use of their own resources as on a typical adventure; he has no money to finance their work. The *Postern-1* is at their disposal, as well as the boat that carries it and any miscellaneous equipment the DM feels is likely to be on board. Kilinin says that instruction in the use of the diving device will be given, if the PCs desire it.

The gnome suggests that no more than one week should be taken up on the job, as he has managed to persuade the Miners' Guild to allow him this amount of time in which to iron out any problems at the mining site. If the PCs cannot complete the task in this time, Kilinin must forfeit 750 gp in late-performance fines as part of his contract with the guild, so the 1,500-gp fee payable to the PCs will be halved.

**Kilinin:** hp 7; I 18; Ch 15; other statistics as per Virtrite. Kilinin's charisma comes from his naturally forceful personality, though he does tend to assume too much on the part of those who work for him.

Allow the PCs to purchase whatever materials they can afford. All items listed in the *Players Handbook* are available in the town at regular prices. When the party is ready, read or paraphrase the following description:

> Kilinin leads you through the town of Postern to a wooden causeway that wends its way over marshy ground. The causeway ends in a short pierlike structure that extends about 50' over a wide, clear lake.
>
> There is quite a lot of activity around the pier as a 40' boat, crewed

by a dozen gnomes, comes in to dock. As the boat gets nearer, you see that it carries a complicated series of winches, pulleys, and bellows—all hooked up to a bell-shaped, round-windowed device with the words "Postern-1" painted boldly across its outer casing. The device hangs from a short crane on the stern of the boat.

Also visible from the shore are a number of minor dents in the diving bell, caused by the monster in the lake. The metal in the *Postern-1* is fairly thin, built to withstand pressure rather than rough knocks. Refer to the end of the adventure for details on the *Postern-1's* operation and the possible problems the PCs may encounter if they descend to the bottom of the lake in the bell.

## Gone Fishin'

The PCs know that they must deal with the pike—but how? The DM, at least, should have an idea of what it is they're up against.

The pike is hungry, as it has devoured almost all of the native fish from the lake. It has also taken some birds and small animals from the surface, so the lake has become strangely quiet. As it hasn't reached adulthood quite yet, this pike is a 12' specimen rather than the 14' type indicated in the *Monster Manual.* Nonetheless, it is quite capable of swallowing whole any halfling or gnome character unlucky enough to be attacked by it. It is also within its power to lunge into the chamber of the diving bell from below to snap at any passengers.

Characters swimming in the lake have a 25% chance per round of attracting the fishy marauder. It is able to home in on fresh blood, locating a bleeding victim with a 95% chance of success if the victim is still in the water.

The pike prefers to lie in ambush, concealed in the weeds or behind rocks near the mining site (see Whitelake Area map) to gain surprise. If it scores a successful hit on a creature, the pike grabs hold with its bony tongue, large canines, and three rows of backward-facing teeth. Anyone with a strength of 18 or more may attempt to roll his *bend bars/lift gates* percentage to break out of this grasp. If the victim is successful in freeing himself, the pike flees and waits for another opportunity.

However, if a character under 4' tall fails to escape, and the pike's attack roll was an unmodified 16 or higher, the victim is swallowed at the start of the next melee round. A swallowed character may attack from inside the pike if he has a short, stabbing weapon (a dagger or knife) in hand at the time of swallowing. However, this attack is at a cumulative –2 to hit per round until either the pike or the victim is dead. The giant pike is AC 10 on the inside. After a meal this size, the giant pike will not eat for 3-6 days.

Remember, too, that victims attacked in the water are also likely to drown if they are unable to breathe water. (See the *Dungeoneer's Survival Guide,* page 12, or the *Wilderness Survival Guide,* page 43. A summary of this information is also given at the end of the module, in the section dealing with the *Postern-1.)*

**Giant pike:** AC 5; MV 36; HD 4; hp 30; #AT 1; THAC0 17; Dmg 4-16; SA can swallow small prey whole, surprise on 1-4; AL N; MM1/78). This pike weighs about 350 lbs. and can haul twice its body weight at MV 24 and three times its weight at MV 12.

It is possible that very large hooks are available in Postern that might be used as fishing gear by the PCs. (Finding bait should be amusing.) If the party elects to fish for the monster with hook and line, the adventurers' main problem will be to find a boat that will not capsize when the pike drags it about after being hooked. The largest boat available in the area is that built for use with the *Postern-1;* all others are small rowboats and rafts. Netting the monster is also possible, though as difficult and dangerous as hook and line fishing—and the PCs must first make a net to catch and hold the beast. The pike can tear through a normal net on a 30% chance per round. Unless braced against a solid support, a line fisher or netter must roll his dexterity or less on 4d6 to avoid being dragged overboard when the pike hits the line or net. The DM may add other modifiers as needed to ensure a fight the PCs will remember.

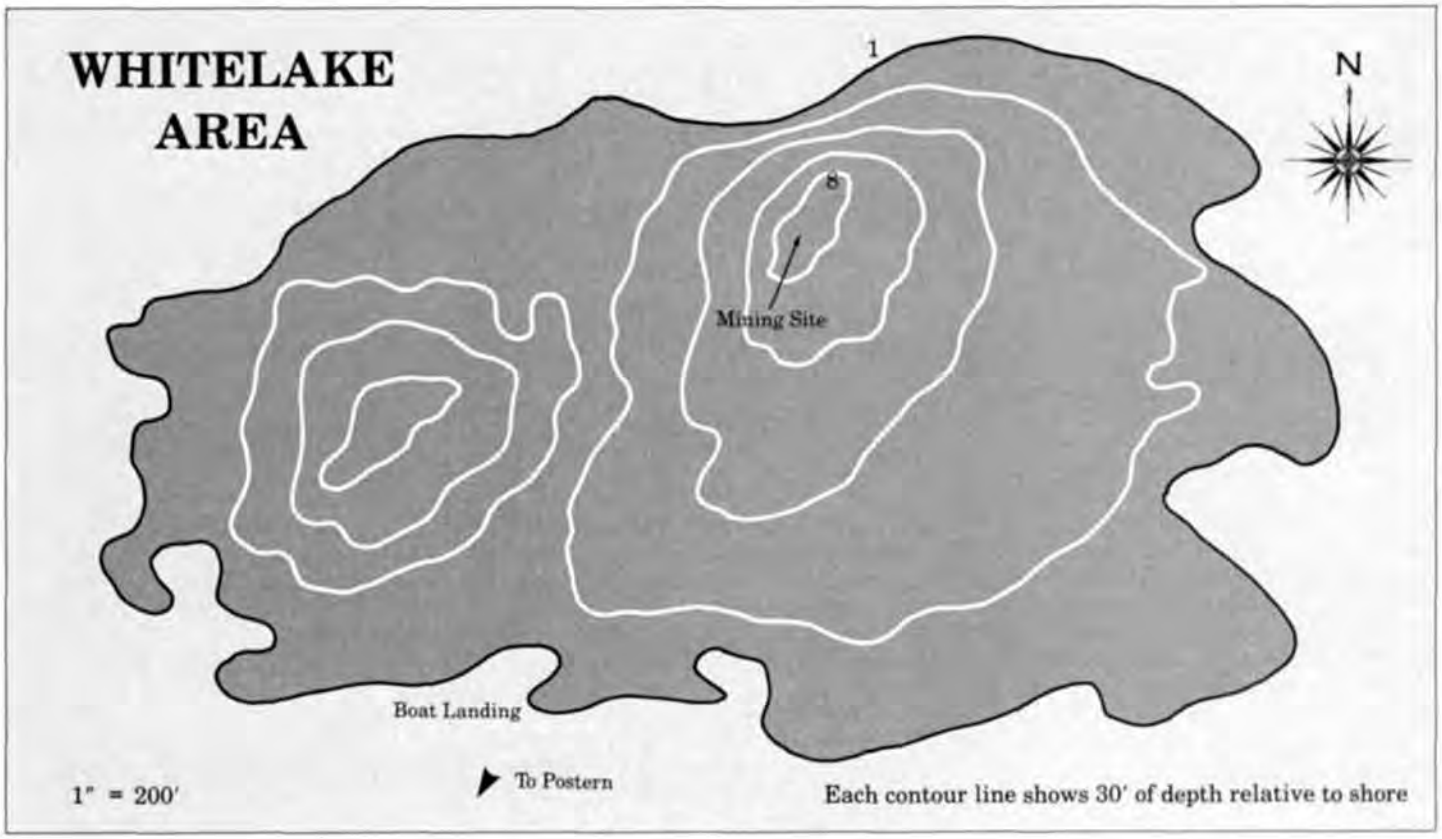
Allow the adventurers plenty of scope for invention. They have a week, after all. The problem of getting rid of the pike is a difficult one, though not insurmountable. A well-aimed series of attacks with arrows, spears, tridents, spells, etc. may ultimately be successful. It depends on the circumstances you dictate. Make it clear, though, that this isn't a picnic.

If the adventurers are successful, they receive an all-night celebration party (and possibly a pike dinner) from the grateful gnomes of Postern. But with the following morning comes a new problem: Kilinin won't pay them, as a *second* pike has appeared in the lake and startled the boat crew of the *Postern-1.* The new pike is reported to be smaller than the first but just as vicious.

**"Small" giant pike:** AC 6; MV 30; HD 2; hp 13; #AT 1; THAC0 19; Dmg 2-8; SA surprise on 1-4; AL N; MM1/78. This pike is only 6' long and weighs 50 lbs. It cannot swallow PCs whole, though it could certainly do so with pixies.

If the adventurers don't figure it out for themselves, Kilinin will comment that, if he didn't think it such a far-fetched idea, he'd almost think that someone was introducing the pike into the lake on purpose, though no streams or rivers are large enough for such monsters to enter or leave Whitelake. The PCs may come to the conclusion that someone has an interest in stopping Kilinin from mining the area. Although the gnome cannot think of anyone likely to go to such lengths, the following rumors may be gleaned, for a few gold pieces, around the town. Each PC who spends over 4 gp gains 1-4 of these rumors; roll 1d6 to see which ones are gained:

1. Kilinin is insured by a large merchant bank so that, in the event of his project failing, he'll be paid a large sum in compensation. (This is false. Kilinin has neither insurance nor an interest in delaying the project.)
2. Kilinin's contract with the Miners' Guild, under which the guild provides backing for the *Postern-1* project, includes provision for a hefty fine should the mining operation fall behind schedule. (True. This is why the gnome hired the PCs in the first place.)
3. Over the past few weeks, livestock has gone missing from several small farms north of the lake. (True. If the PCs follow up on this, they will hear descriptions of large, hulking, troll-like creatures who carried off a couple of sheep. This may have been a couple of merrows or some trolls out on the rampage.)
4. Six weeks before Kilinin began his tests with the diving bell (about three months ago), some gnomes reported seeing strange animal tracks around the lakeside. These looked like cattle tracks, but no trace of stray livestock




was found, and no one reported losing cattle. (True. These rothé (see area 2) were herded into the caverns below Whitelake as foodstuffs for the merrows.)

5. Parts for the *Postern-1* were donated by the Acme Waste Company, a group based in a nearby city that specializes in trash removal. (True. If a PC looks carefully at the ceiling of the diving bell, he'll just make out the words "Acme Waste Company" overpainted with white paint. This has no bearing on the adventure other than making the PCs uncomfortable at the prospect of riding to the bottom of the lake in a converted rubbish bin.)
6. The land around the north end of the lake is hunted by a monster that walks on two legs and leaves a trail of slime behind it. Anyone who looks this monster in the eye is certain to die within 24 hours. (False. This is a muddled version of a sighting of one of the aquatic ogres by a gnome named Berklut, who overindulged at a friend's party and had to walk home late. His sighting and the hangover he had the next day contributed to his vision of a nasty monster, more powerful than that which he actually saw.)

No other worthwhile rumors can be dragged out of the townspeople. The ones above should prompt the PCs to further investigation of the northern shore of Whitelake. If, instead, they kill the second pike, a *third* pike appears—and Kilinin refuses to pay the PCs until they discover the source of the pike infestation and stop it.

At the DM's discretion, the PCs may discover the lake-bottom entrance to the merrows' caverns on a dive in the *Postern-1*. If they follow this route, the PCs will end up in area 8 in the caverns.

**Whitelake Area**

In general, the area to the north of the lake is semiwilderness, and few of the locals bother to go there. The adventurers may encounter various forms of wildlife on their reconnaissance of this area.

Use 1d8 to determine what the PCs encounter or choose personally from the creatures listed below. Roll for an encounter once per hour, with a 1 on 1d6 indicating an encounter takes place. In all cases, the animals encountered are just going about their normal business. A *speak with animals* spell could be useful in finding out about the merrows' lair.

1-2: Al-mi'raj (6); AC 6; MV 18; HD 1; hp 7, 5 (× 3), 3(×2); #AT 1; THAC0 19; Dmg 1-4; AL N; FF/11.
3: Irish deer; AC 7; MV 18; HD 4; hp 28; #AT 1 (2 if another opponent is within reach); THAC0 17; Dmg 2-12 (2-12); AL N; MM1/55.
4: Wild cat: AC 5; MV 18; HD 1; hp 8; #AT 3; THAC0 19; Dmg 1-2/1-2/1-2; SA surprise prey on 1-3, rear claws for 1-2/1-2; SD surprised only on 1 in 6; AL N; MM2/22.
5: Wolves (8): AC 7; MV 18; HD 2+2; hp 15 (×2); 14 (×2), 13, 12 (×2), 10; #AT 1; THAC0 19; Dmg 2-5; AL N; MM1/101.
6: Weasel, giant: AC 6; MV 15; HD 3+3; hp 13; #AT 1; THAC0 17; Dmg 2-12; SA drain blood; AL N; MM1/100.
7: Goat, giant: AC 7; MV 18; HD 3+1; hp 15; #AT 1; THAC0 17; Dmg 2-16; SA charge for +4 hp damage; AL N; MM1/47.

8: Badgers (3): AC 4; MV 6(3); HD 1+2; hp 7, 6, 3, #AT 3; THAC0 19; Dmg 1-2/1-2/1-3; AL N; MM1/8.

Eventually, either through conversation with the animals encountered or by stumbling upon tracks made by the aquatic ogres, the PCs should discover the hidden entrance to the ogres' caverns. (See the Whitelake Area map and The Merrows' Lair map for details.)

**The Merrows' Lair**

The DM may either allow for a chance that one or more of the aquatic ogres are encountered going about their normal routine in the caverns, or else have the merrow remain in area 9 (assuming that the PCs take less than six game hours to go through the lair). If random encounters are desired, roll 1d8 every game turn that the PCs are in the caverns. On a roll of 1, an encounter is indicated, and 1d8 is rolled on the following table. All of the ogres are described at area 9. Unless alerted, they are going about their usual duties in the lair.

| 1d8 | Encounter |
|---|---|
| 1 | Kru the shaman |
| 2 | Kalk |
| 3 | Nuk |
| 4 | Gra |
| 5 | Blo |
| 6 | Lun |
| 7-8 | Roll 1d6 twice for two of the above. |

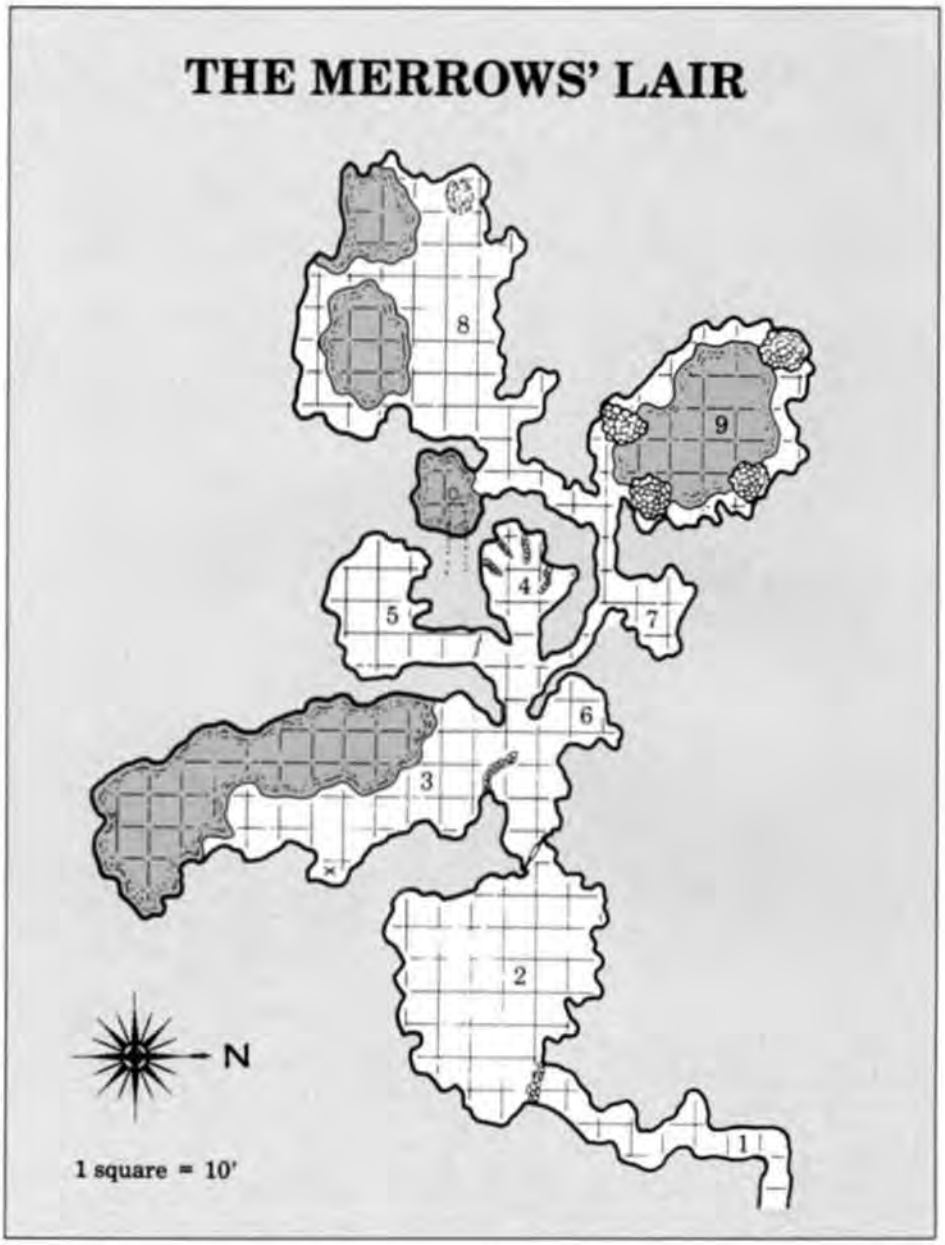
**1. Entrance from North Shore.**

The tracks lead to a tunnel entrance, hidden by brush and weeds, in a hillside on the north shore of the lake. The 7'-diameter tunnel twists and turns, following an easterly track for about 90 yards. The opening at the tunnel's end is partially blocked by what appears to be a stone wall, built to a height of around 5'. From beyond the wall you can hear low animal noises echoing in a larger cavern.

Attentive PCs will notice that the tunnel has markings along the lower part of its walls in gnomish writing, indicating that it has been repeatedly discovered and forgotten by wandering gnomes over the centuries. No local gnomes currently recall the tunnel's existence.

The wall has obviously been purposefully built, though it is sloppily constructed without mortar and is easy to dismantle (no gnome would have built it). Its chief purpose is to serve as an obstruction to the movement of the creatures housed in area 2. The wall is often taken down and rebuilt by the merrows to allow passage back and forth through the tunnel.

Large humanoid footprints and miniature hoofprints can be seen on the floor. Characters without infravision will, of course, need some light source to notice these marks.




**2. The Rothé Herd.**

This large cavern is barred by a 5'-high stone wall blocking the east exit, and a short wooden gate closing off an exit to the west. The cave is overgrown with various forms of mosses, fungi, and ferns. It is apparently the grazing ground of many small, unusual-looking oxen. These animals are about 4' tall and are covered with coats of long black hair. The majority of the herd runs away

from the entrance in panic as you look in, but one or two of the bulls take up threatening positions in front of the cows and calves.

The bulls will not attack unless they feel the herd is under direct threat, or unless they smell blood from injured PCs.

The rothé were herded into the cave as food for the ogres. Because the only humanoid creatures they know are the ogres, the rothé will be uneasy around the PCs. If the PCs enter the cavern, there is a 50% chance that the rothé will be more curious than hostile, provided that the adventurers move slowly and carefully. However, any bright light or loud noise causes these animals to flee to the furthest recesses of the cave, with a 50% chance of alerting the merrows to intruders in the caves.

**Rothé** (45): AC 7; MV 9; HD 2; hp 13 each; #AT 3; THAC0 19,; Dmg 1-3/1-3/1-8 (two horns, one bite); AL N; FF/76.

**3. Next Season's Grazing.**

A short wooden gate, about 4' high, blocks the entrance to a huge cavern filled with pale green vegetation and a shallow pool of sparkling water. The sounds of crickets can be heard far off to the south. Light from luminous fungi is reflected from the pool back to the ceiling, giving the cavern a softly lit appearance. The whole scene reminds one of a twilit spring morning—except, of course, for the absence of a blue sky.

The gate has been placed here to prevent the rothé from straying into the cave where vegetation is being left to grow for the next season's grazing. Meanwhile, the rothé are being accommodated quite comfortably in area 2.

The plants in this cavern are of strange, subterranean varieties, mostly mosses and ferns that can tolerate damp conditions and low light levels. The thin coating of soil on the rock floor has been built up with animal dung and aquatic plants harvested from the lake. Various types of small and large growths have been cut down to add to the humus.

One of the plants (marked X on The Merrows' Lair map) has grown quite large during this period of inactivity in the cavern. It is a piece of mantrap, and because of its immaturity, its abilities and statistics have been adjusted slightly downward.

**Mantrap:** AC 6; MV nil; HD 2; hp 16; #AT 2; THAC0 19; Dmg special; SA pollen attracts victims in a 30' radius; AL N; MM2/83.

If the PCs survive this menace, they may well have more trouble from the cave crickets at the south end of the cave, even though damage from these insects is inflicted only accidentally as the creatures try to escape.

**Cave Crickets** (6): AC 4; MV 6 (hop 3); HD 1+3; hp 11, 8, 7, 6; #AT nil; THAC0 19; Dmg nil; SA jump, kick; AL N; MM2/23.

The shallow pool is clear though dangerous. The water is drinkable, but the bottom is muddy, and anyone wading about in it has a 30% chance of stepping into quicksand. Rescuers should have little difficulty in pulling out victims, as long as this is done within four melee rounds of the adventurer becoming stuck.

**4. Cattle Shed.**

This area is divided into stalls similar to those found in a farmyard. Each stall is fairly clean and appears to have been swept out recently. There is a heavy smell of dung in the air but no sign of any droppings in this cavern.

This cave is used as a byre for members of the rothé herd. There are no droppings because the merrows clean them up—not for the sake of hygiene but for use in the mushroom beds at area 5.

**5. Mushrooms.**

The entrance to this area is curtained with a strange fibrous material like coarse hair—black and with some mossy growth among its fibers.

On the other side of the curtain is a short tunnel that opens into a cavern strongly smelling of animal dung. The dung is spread out evenly like a carpet, and white growths of fungi cover the floor.

The curtain is an obstacle to any light from the odd patches of luminous fungi that sometimes appear along the cave walls. Such fungi are not allowed to grow among their normal cousins in this cave. The curtain is made from two rothé hides spliced together.

The fungi inside are not dangerous and are actually edible. The merrows leave them to their own devices except for applying more manure as it becomes available and harvesting the fungi as they ripen.

If the PCs have come into the caves accidentally, as in the case of entering via the pike pool at area 8, describe the pelts as those of "some hairy quadruped." Likewise, the dung can be said to be that of "some cowlike creature."

No harm or benefit will accrue to the PCs should they consume any of the mushrooms.

**6. Dungbuggies.**

This small cave holds three buckets, two wooden devices that look like stretchers, and three simple shovels. There is nothing else of interest here.

The buckets are used to fetch water from the pools to bring to the rothé as they need it. The merrows are loathe to carry dung to area 5 in their hands, so the stretchers are used as collectors for the fertilizer produced by the animals. The shovels speak for themselves.

**7. Green Slime.**

This cave is totally dark, with none of the occasional luminous fungi present. It appears to be empty and disused.

The roof of this cave is covered with green slime, which accounts for the lack of fungi. Anyone going in to investigate is 99% likely to be attacked by the slime.

**Green slime:** AC 9; MV nil; HD 2; hp 12; #AT 1 drop per round; THAC0 19 (chance to hit by dropping); Dmg special; SA dissolves flesh in 1-4 rounds, destroys metal; SD unharmed by weapons or spells (except fire, cold, and *cure disease*); AL N; MM1/49.

**8. Pike Pools.**

The tunnel opens into a cavern whose floor is largely covered with pools of water. To the southeast, a small cave is almost completely underwater. To the southwest, the larger cavern contains two pools surrounded by well-

beaten paths. At the westernmost end of the cave is a refuse pile made up of bones and skins. Nothing else of interest is visible.

The pool that almost fills the cave to the southeast is the mouth of an underwater tunnel that leads to the lake. (The PCs may have already discovered this during one of their dives in the *Postern-1.*) If a PC chooses to swim along the tunnel's length, he will find it to be 5-8' wide and 325' long, opening into Whitelake about 100' from the site of Kilinin's mine. If the giant pike has not yet been dealt with, there is a 25% chance it will be encountered in this tunnel, as it sometimes comes in here to be fed. As this cavern is in the hills north of the lake, and at the water level, the area does not flood.

Each of the two pools to the southwest contains an immature (6'-long) giant pike that is being raised by the merrows to join its companions in the lake if required. These pike have the same statistics as the second one encountered in the lake; if a third pike was encountered in the lake, one of these two pike will be missing. The refuse pile is made up of the bones of rothé, some sheep carcasses, and one or two deer. These were once food for the merrows, and the scraps are given in controlled measures to the pike. The remnants are dumped here.

The pike remain small because they are not given quite enough to eat. Once released, though, the giant fish may thrive for a time on what's left of the lake's wildlife, returning to the tunnel mouth at this area for additional feeding from time to time. The merrows have found that underfeeding makes for more vicious monsters and so feed the pike only irregularly.

**9. The Merrows.** The most unusual feature of this large cavern is a ledge, about 6-8' wide, that skirts a pool of clear water about 12' deep. Four beehive-shaped huts have been built half on the ledge and half in the water, with one level dry and one level submerged. The entrances to these huts are below the waterline. Although the merrows can breathe air, they need to wet their gills periodically. The construction of the stone huts meets this need while also providing a place to keep their goods dry.

The large pool allows each aquatic ogre plenty of room for its swimming charge, and each may combine this with a leap from the water of up to 10' if a charge has had at least 30' to build up momentum. If the merrows can surprise the party, they will leap out of the water at PCs standing at the cave entrance and attack at +1 to hit.

With the exceptions noted later, all the merrows share their leader's statistics.

**Kru, 3rd-level merrow shaman:** AC 4; MV 6//12; HD 4d8 +4 +2d4 (shaman bonus); hp 39; #AT 3 or 1; THAC0 17; Dmg 1-6/1-6/2-8 or by weapon type on first attack (spear for 2-12 with charge); SA swimming charge at +1 to hit, spell use; SD camouflage; AL CE; MM2/96. Spells: *cure light wounds, darkness, speak with animals.* Kru carries a waterproof packet of *dust of plant growth* (as the third-level priest spell) that operates at the 8th level of ability.

Kru is the merrows' shaman and leader. He lives alone in the hut at the northeastern end of the cavern. It was Kru who led this small band to Whitelake as a sort of experiment, to see if they could manage by themselves away from their overcrowded lair, along the coastline of a large, nearby body of water. He has problems with others in his group who would much prefer to do some serious raiding of the nearby farms. Kru has reasoned that they must wait until they are stronger before doing this, as he believes the gnomes and their allies would certainly destroy them at present. On several occasions, Kru has been unable to control the other ogres who, through pure boredom, have made excursions to the outdoors.

To build up the group, Kru has used his *speak with animals* spell to persuade the rothé that the vegetation in the caverns is quite tasty, and so tricked them into captivity. Kru has earned some respect for this, as the band now has a regular food supply, though the merrow are not partial to the work that Kru says is necessary to maintain the small herd.

When Kilinin's experiments with the *Postern-1* moved close to the merrows' lake exit (area 8), Kru thought it was only a matter of time before the colony was discovered. Racking his brains, he thought of a means of getting rid of this threat. Traveling overland to the merrows' original colony, he located some giant pike fry and removed them to

Whitelake. The survivors are the ones encountered in the caves and in Whitelake.

Kru is unprepared for the gnomes' hiring of adventurers to eliminate the pike (it's outside his experience) and has no contingencies to deal with the PCs. Once discovered, the shaman will do all he can to eliminate the PCs so that they can't get word back to Postern about the ogre colony. The destruction of a group of adventurers, and the capture of weapons and useful gear, will go a long way toward increasing his prestige so that Kru can acquire mates from the mother colony for his band.

At the back of Kru's cave is a leather bag containing his personal treasure of 1,500 gp.

**Kalk and Nuk** (HD 4+4; hp 31, 29; each with one spear) live in the northwestern hut and are next in the hierarchy of the group at Whitelake. Although they agree on the fact that they have a better standard of living than other ogres they have met, they sorely miss pillaging and raiding. They are 99% likely to attack any PCs on sight with little chance of failing moral, due to their frustration at inaction.

**Gra** (HD 4+4; hp 27; trident) has the worst hut, the one farthest south, and is discontent with his lot although loyal (after a fashion) to the other ogres. He has been given the job of butchering the rothé, which he enjoys, and feeding the pike, which he dislikes. Gra is not too brave, but he will fight if so ordered by Kalk, Nuk, or Kru. He will run for help, however, if he encounters the PCs on his own.

**Blo and Lun** (HD 4+4; hp 20, 19; one spear each) get on well enough, as neither is too bright. They are fanatically loyal to the tribe and are looking forward to the day when they have enough prestige to take mates. Neither ogre keeps any treasure in their southeastern hut.

## Concluding the Adventure

The PCs may battle it out with the merrows in true hack-and-slash style, or they may be pursued by the monsters through the caves. How they fare depends much on how they entered the caves in the first place. An accident or discovery through search of the tunnel at area 8 may have deposited them in the caves, or they may have come in through area 1.

In the first instance, the adventurers may be in a real fix, rushing about through unknown caves with a bunch of hostile ogres hot on their heels. In the second case, a retreat to the overland exit could result in a running battle around the borders of the lake, possibly involving the unwarlike gnomes as victims or spectators. A battle on the lake itself, involving the merrows' attack on the *Postern-1* boat, is possible, too.

Naturally, the adventurers could also slay all the ogres in combat and solve a lot of problems for everyone! The DM will discover the most probable ending by dint of what the PCs themselves decide to do.

### Further Adventures

Further possibilities for adventures in the Whitelake area can be found by using the *Postern-1:*

—A prehistoric tomb, recorded on an ancient map, can be located only by using the diving bell to descend to the lake bed.

—Tracking any surviving aquatic ogres to their mother colony at a large, nearby body of water leads to more contact with merrows—this time on a larger scale.

—A troll wanders into part of the gnomish mines of Postern, and the PCs are hired to track him down—for a suitable fee, of course. What new crazy invention will Kilinin press on the adventurers to test-drive in the depths this time?

—And of course, the giant pike or its replacements may not have been dealt with when the PCs discover the caverns.

### The *Postern-1*

The *Postern-1* is a primitive form of diving bell constructed of a double hull of light steel with two specially sealed windows for observation. It is open ended (like a bell), and this opening is its only entrance or exit.

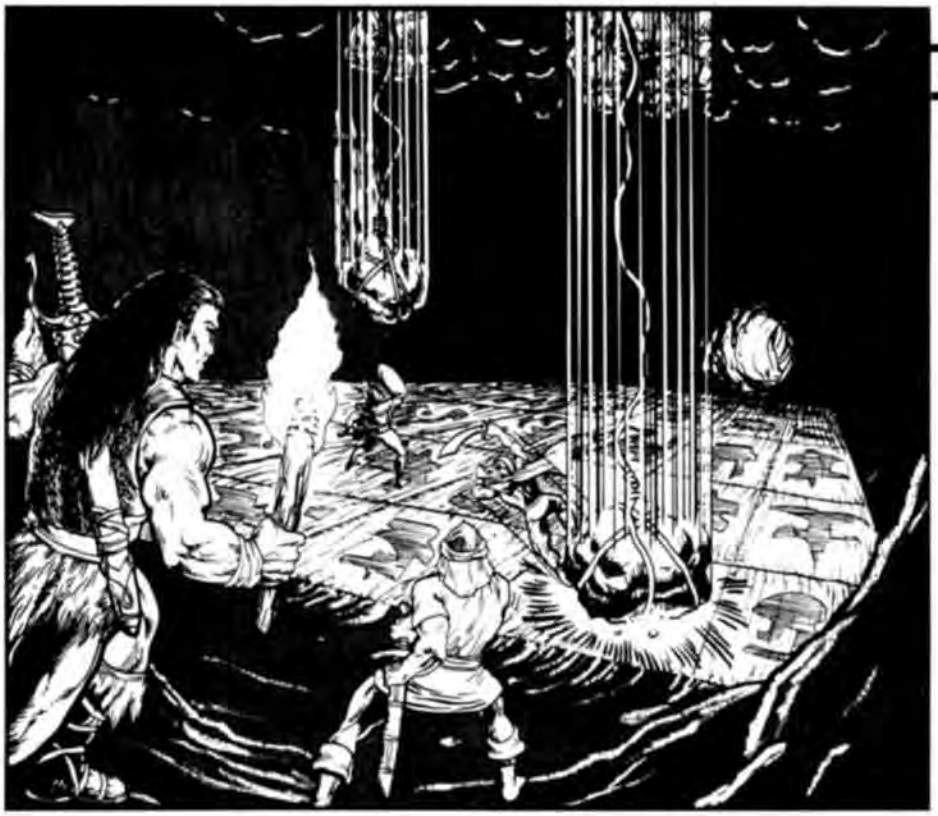
Air is pumped into the bell by a series of oversized hand bellows aboard Kilinin's boat. The air is sent down a series of connected hollow reeds that have been strengthened with copper wire. Each connection is a knuckle joint tied up with tarred hemp as waterproofing (the gnomes have yet to discover flexible rubber hose—this is a serviceable substitute).

When all bellows are working, the air is sufficient to push out the water, leaving the diving bell's operators dry, safe from drowning, and able to look out through the windows or floor opening at the approaching lake bed. Light has been provided by a cleric from the town (for a sizable donation) in the form of *continual light* spells cast onto two lanterns that may be hooded or uncovered as the operators desire. Once on the lake bed, the operators actually stand in the mud to pick or dig up the raw gemstones for return to the surface.

Kilinin's boat (usually called just that) is 40' long and 15' wide, with a bow anchor, no rudder, and a relatively flat bottom that can cruise through water only 5' deep. The boat resembles a normal fishing boat with a flat deck and no pilot house; the bow is pointed, but the stern is flat and is covered with equipment for the *Postern-1*. Four 10' oars in oarlocks are mounted on each side, each oar crewed by one gnome. Two gnomes are required to crew the air bellows for the diving bell, four are required to operate the winches and cables for the bell, and two more assist with navigation, making depth readings using a marked rope with a weight on one end, and other jobs as needed. Since the discovery of the giant pike in the lake, four more gnomes carrying two short spears each have gone aboard the boat. Kilinin always comes along for a dive and is almost always one of the bell's crew; in addition, 1-4 other gnomes will be along for the dive to the bottom. All gnomes aboard the ship share the same statistics as Virtrite (see "For the Player Characters"), with no armor and 3-8 hp each. Aside from their spears, the gnomes have hammers, picks, shovels, chisels, knives, and other implements that might serve as weapons in a pinch.

Adventurers rolling their intelligence scores or lower on 1d20 will realize that the bell is incapable of movement independent of the chain and pulley on the crane from which it is suspended. If the bell is tipped over, the air escapes and the crew members are in danger of drowning unless they can swim to the surface. In this event, use the rules for breath holding from either the *WSG*, page 43, or from the *DSG*, page 12.

(continued on page 64)



# TALLOW'S DEEP

BY STEVE GILBERT & BILL SLAVICSEK

## In the goblins' mine, adventurers get the shaft.

Artwork by Scott Rosema

*While this is Bill and Steve's first appearance in DUNGEON® Adventures, they are certainly no strangers to gaming. After four years in the service of The Computer at West End Games, Steve recently turned to free-lancing and writing short stories. Bill joined the West End Games staff over three years ago and has worked on everything from board games to role-playing games, including the STAR WARS®, GHOSTBUSTERS™, and PARANOIA™ systems. They've both done other free-lance projects for TSR, and they play a mean game of Crush the Skull.*

"Tallow's Deep" is an AD&D® adventure for 3-6 characters of levels 4-7 (about 27 total levels) and of a good mix of classes. This adventure may take place in any mysterious mountain range on the edge of civilization. The generic setting and sparse use of place names allow the DM to easily place this adventure in the path of his player characters with a minimum of work.

Note that, in many places in the text, the PCs have chances to detect traps, secret doors, and so forth. Only those PCs who have the proper natural skills, spells, or magical items should be given the chance to locate such items, unless otherwise stated.

This adventure answers the question, "If goblins are so easy to kill, why are there so many of the blasted beasties?" The truth is, goblins are not that easy to kill if they are prepared to do everything in their power to survive. The goblins in this adventure have developed a rather unique and cunning combat style that makes them quite fearsome—if not invincible—in their cramped and dark caverns beneath the earth.

This is an adventure that takes a group of heroes into the fortified frontier tunnels of the goblin network. While this is basically an underground fort far removed from the central core of goblin civilization, it nevertheless serves to show the fierce determination, crafty combat prowess, and military mindset of the sons of Maglubiyet, the dark god of goblinkind.

So let your adventurers believe that they are in for a night of wholesale slaughter as they take on a "puny" goblin tribe. Most of the fun lies in discovering just how formidable this "puny" tribe can be!

## Adventure Background

The Grayjag Mountains have long been a place of danger and mystery. Among their steel-gray peaks, all manner of strange and deadly creatures roam unchecked, feasting on the occasional hapless traveler or reckless caravan. The mountains have been a mecca for stalwart adventurers since the first knight took up helm and sword and went off to face the unknown. Many such brave souls never returned from the Grayjags.

So it came as some surprise when the merchant Grundel Tallow established a trading post and small village at the foot of these mountains, in the very shadows of their jagged peaks. The small village prospered as a trading center for those who attempted to cross the mountains, and for hunters and the like who sought to barter their wares.

Then silver was discovered in the bowels of the steel-gray rock, and Tallow poured in the funds necessary to hollow out a small mine, Tallow's Deep. Things looked good for the village of Tallow's Post, and there was talk that perhaps the frontier would at last become a manageable and decent place to live.

But disaster struck suddenly. About a month ago, mine workers broke through into a hidden chamber, a room freshly dug—but not by human hands. The miners were set upon by scores of goblins, who made short work of the surprised and ill-equipped men. Only one of the workers escaped to tell the tale, but he died shortly thereafter from his terrible wounds.

## For the Player Characters

After arriving in the small frontier town of Tallow's Post, a mining community in the foothills of the Grayjag Mountains, you are directed to the Silver Vein Inn. The spacious common room is warm and comfortable, filled with townsfolk and traders. But the normal joviality of a typical inn is missing, conversation is low, and the citizens cast anxious looks in your direction. At one end of the bar sits a lone, heavyset man. He appears worried and distressed, constantly stroking his close-cropped beard. When he notices you, some of the despair leaves his face and hope gleams weakly in his eyes. He motions for you to join him.

"Welcome to Tallow's Post, good adventurers. I am Grundel Tallow, founder of this once-thriving community. Have you time to hear a sad tale?" Before any of you can object, Grundel motions to the barmaid to bring ale for everyone, and he launches into his story.

"We started this community with a trading post and a silver mine, and all looked right with the world. Then, three days ago, the miners were working when a score of foul goblins invaded the shaft and attacked. Only poor Rall escaped to tell the tale, but he died this morning from his grievous wounds. Good Sergeant Fornd, our town protector, took eight men to investigate the day after the attack. Fornd and his party have not yet returned, and I fear they are dead . . . or worse. All this, and now today we found the remains of one of our merchant caravans near here. It was not a pretty sight.

"The disgusting creatures are only goblins—small, cowardly beasts—and were I a younger man, I would lead a group of stout adventurers—much like yourselves—to rid us of these foul vermin. Oh, if only I were younger . . ." Grundel trails off and bows his head.

## For the Dungeon Master

Grundel Tallow is a rotund man in his mid-40s, but much of his youth is gone. He is a retired fighter turned merchant, with a keen eye for profit. Grundel is especially unhappy at the present time because his profit margin is nonexistent. Since the goblin attack, his mine has been shut down, and the trading post is losing money. Already, there is talk in the streets of packing up and moving on. Tallow will hear none of that. He is determined to find a hardy group of adventurers to go out and win back his mine.

Tallow's speech is designed to play on the adventurers' sympathy. If that doesn't work, he is not above using money. But even though he is desperate, he hasn't lost his wits. If nothing else, Tallow is a shrewd businessman. He will whine, weasel, bully, cajole, and perhaps even pay the PCs to rid his mine of the goblin menace. However, money will be his last option during negotiations. Instead, he promises the adventurers shares of the goblin treasure trove—10%, 20%, even 50% of whatever they find can be theirs! But if the PCs drive a hard bargain, Grundel relents. His bottom line is: Everything they find they keep, plus they get 20% of the mine's output for a year. He will also make them honorary town protectors, with "all the rights and privileges thereof" (none) if they successfully return.

**Grundel Tallow:** AC 10; MV 12; F2; hp 15; #AT 1; THAC0 19; Dmg by weapon type; I 14, Ch 14, other statistics 11; AL NG; short sword.

The PCs can buy whatever they need in the town (at a 20% discount, too), and 12-year-old Culum, an errand runner for Tallow, agrees to accompany them as a guide. He takes them as far as the mine, but under no circumstances will the boy go with them into the dark tunnels unless he is threatened with severe bodily harm. Even then, he wails and mutters the whole time, making the PCs' chances to sneak in very slim indeed.

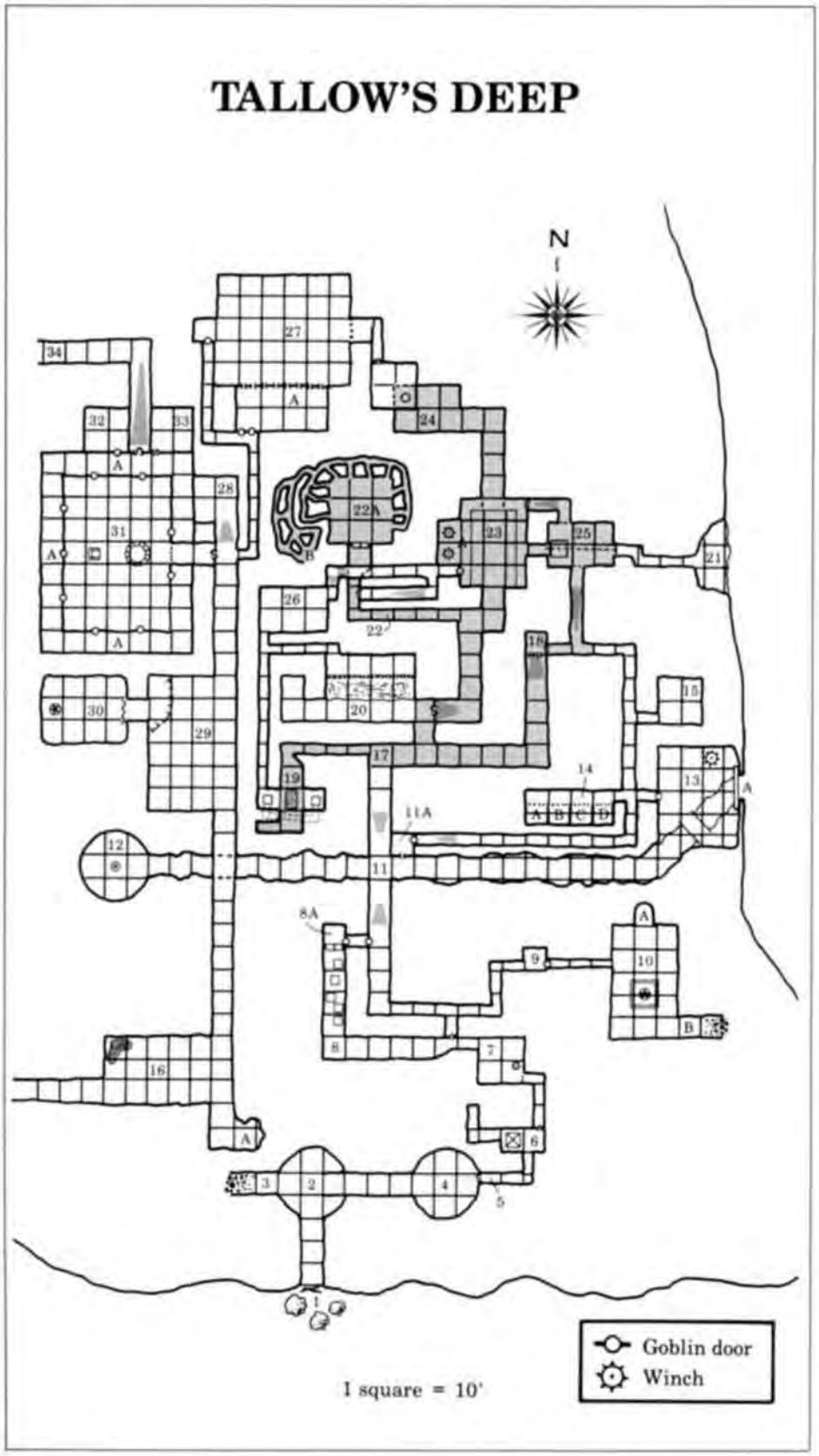
Culum is a typical street urchin: cute, dimpled, and smudgy-faced. He is also crafty, sarcastic, and a fledgling thief. The PCs are apt to find young Culum innocently groping in their packs and pockets on more than one occasion during the two-hour trek to the mine. These events will often be preceeded by a clever diversion. "Look! Over there! A dragon!" is Culum's favorite tactic.

**Culum:** AC 10; MV 12; T1; hp 3; #AT 0; THAC0 20; Dmg nil (Culum is nonviolent); D 15, other statistics 9; AL N.

### The Goblins of Tallow's Deep

The mine is a crudely dug chamber and tunnel network that leads a short distance into the mountain. Beyond the broken tunnel is the domain of the sons of Maglubiyet, the goblin war god. Long beset by orcs, gnomes, dwarves, and other neighboring peoples of the deep, the goblins have developed a military mindset. This can be seen in their lifestyle, their architecture, and their leisure activities. There's more to the little monsters than is commonly believed, as will quickly become apparent when the PCs explore the tunnels beyond the mine.

To goblins, the art of war is a way of life. Because they are not powerful warriors like trolls or bugbears, the goblins have created a style of stealthy combat and team warfare. Never will a single goblin face a single foe when two dozen could easily overwhelm a lone fighter. The goblins are not cowards. They consider themselves prudent, intelligent, and graceful employers of the "team concept." As one goblin chieftain put it, "Twelve to one, win the day. One to one, run away."




Goblins revel in torture and slavery. They are masters of traps, tricks, and deadly devices. They rejoice in praising and sacrificing to their demanding god. Weak and easily dispatched above-ground and in human-built dungeons, they are vicious when encountered in their own underground lairs. These lairs are death traps and siege structures, designed to protect the main city from any and all invaders.

These particular goblins, the Skull Crusher tribe, have a vast metropolis deep within the mountain. They are devoted to their king, Mogoglub, a giant of a goblin who has inspired his people to a fevered jihad, a religious war that will bring the goblins into direct conflict with human nations. To this end, Mogoglub's people have been constructing a series of underground fortresses from which to protect their tunnels and, when the time comes, launch an offensive into the outside world. The proximity of Tallow's Post and the real threat the mine posed to his domain have made Mogoglub even more determined to ready his people for war—but his preparations were to be made in secret.

This particular outpost is under the command of Grishog, a cunning and powerful goblin. He is one of Mogoglub's most trusted lieutenants and makes no effort to hide his ambitious nature. It was his idea to dig the tunnel that connected with Tallow's Deep. It was also his order that sent scores of goblin warriors down upon the surprised miners. It was also by Grishog's order that a passing merchant caravan was overwhelmed. Now the nearest human settlement is aware of the goblins. Mogoglub will not be pleased, as this will rush his plans for conquest.

Unless otherwise stated, the **goblins** encountered in this adventure have the following statistics: AC 6; MV 6; HD 1–1; #AT 1; THAC0 20; Dmg by weapon type; AL LE. They wear studded leather armor and use shields. **Goblin guards** with AC 5 use chain mail with no shields. Goblins with AC 7 have no shields. Generally, only hit points and weapons are given for goblins in these tunnels. The goblins in this area have 90' infravision.

### Special Features

This scenario has a few special features that you should keep in mind as you run the adventure. These are outlined below.

*Goblin Doors:* A goblin door is readily apparent to the denizens of a goblin lair, but to anyone not familiar with these portals, such a door is nearly invisible. A goblin door is made to look exactly like whatever material it is stuck in, whether it be stone, wood, or dirt. For purposes of play, these doorways cannot be found without active searching. However, they are easier to find than secret doors. Add +1 to elven or half-elven PCs' usual rolls to find secret doors; optionally, allow dwarves and thieves their normal rolls to find traps. Other PCs have a 1-in-12 chance of locating these doors. Only one roll per door is allowed per PC.

*Goblin Tunnels:* The passages that goblins dig are rough, low, and cramped to larger creatures. The 4'-tall goblins find them roomy and comfortable. These tunnels are also the goblins' most basic form of defense. In these goblin tunnels, PCs may march only in single file. In addition, elves, humans, or other characters more than 4' tall are penalized –2 to hit opponents and +2 to armor class. For purposes of this adventure, all 4'-wide passages are 5'-high goblin tunnels; larger passages have no such penalties, having 10'-high ceilings unless otherwise noted.

*Exits From the Mine:* The goblins may enter and leave their caverns through areas 1 (to the outside), 16 (to the outside), and 34 (to yet more goblin tunnels, forts, and cities). In addition, an exit leads from area 12 into an underground lake, deep within the earth and out of this module's scope, and the river described at area 21 heads for the same lake. Goblins won't use these latter two "exits" voluntarily.

*Multilevel Rooms:* Unlike most creatures, goblins tend to think in three dimensions when constructing their lairs. To this end, many of the traps and rooms that the PCs encounter are multilevel in design. These rooms have accompanying diagrams in the text to help you visualize them. Study these a bit before you attempt to run the adventure.

*Arrow Slits and Murder Holes:* An arrow slit is a 2'×3" hole in a wall through which a goblin archer can fire arrows. A murder hole is a similar opening in a ceiling or floor allowing the goblins to attack invaders from above or below. These openings are constructed to blend into the shadowy hollows of walls and ceilings, making them difficult to spot until the attack begins. Arrow slits and murder holes have great defensive advantages, especially in the narrow confines of the mine. Give goblins a +1 to hit and a +6 bonus to armor class vs. all missile and melee attacks when they are attacking from these openings. Allow PCs to detect murder holes and arrow slits as traps, using the proper skills, spells, or magical devices.

*Alertness:* The trick to defeating a lair of goblins is to keep the element of surprise. Once this is lost, PCs will face the full force and cunning of the goblin fortress. To simulate this, many rooms in this adventure have two descriptions: alerted and unalerted. The PCs will find alerted goblins much more organized and deadly than those taken by surprise. You will be instructed in the text how to determine the alerted or unalerted state of the fortress.

*Drums:* Goblins have especially short attention spans. If something is not directly in front of them, they may forget about it. So, once intruders are spotted, goblin leaders use the constant beating of drums to keep their warriors in a fevered state. Use the sound of these drums to add suspense and flavor to your descriptions. And keep in mind that the drums are also a means of communication within the fortress. Once the goblins are alerted, the drums will continue until Grishog issues the order to stop. Drums are located in areas 11A, 27A, 30, and 31A.

*Suspense:* Once the players enter the cramped, dark passages beyond Tallow's Deep, they have quite literally entered another world. This is the goblins' domain, not a place for surface dwellers and lovers of light. When running this adventure, be aware of the element of suspense and atmosphere inherent in the story. In the early part of the adventure, the PCs will probably expect an easy romp through spacious dungeon corridors. But, as the adventure progresses, they might find themselves cut off and isolated in a hostile and claustrophobic realm. The drums will get louder and beat faster as the adventurers work their way deeper into the goblin fortress, leaving little doubt in the PCs' minds that they are being watched. An attack can come at any time, in any place, from any direction. Play on this fear.

## Tallow's Deep

**1. Entrance to Tallow's Deep.**

> Before you is the entrance to Tallow's Deep. The townsfolk said no one but Sergeant Fornd had been to the mine since the attack, yet you find it boarded up and covered with broken limbs and branches. Planted in the ground before the entrance is a wooden sign. The message, written in poor Common, reads "Keep Out Or Else."

Realizing that he had probably gone too far in his attacks on the local humans, Grishog had a token barrier thrown up over the mine entrance, and he warned his troops to prepare for a human counterattack. The barrier was re-erected after Sergeant Fornd's force was captured in the tunnels.

A ranger can easily detect goblin footprints around the mine opening and heading into the tunnel. However, the tracks are several days old, and it is difficult to determine the number of goblins who made them. Once inside the mine, it is impossible to follow the tracks across the rocky floor.

If the PCs leave any horses or other animals (or hirelings, for that matter) outside this area, see area 16 for details on the results.

When the PCs clear away the boards, they see a passage leading north.

> A stale, musty breeze beckons from the tunnel. Wooden beams line both sides of the passage. As you step into the mine, you notice numerous dark alcoves where the miners had followed short veins of silver. All is silent.

The passageway heads north for 30' before it opens into area 2.

**2. The First Strike.**

> This is a large circular chamber with openings on the east and west. In the center is an overturned ore cart, its contents scattered across the floor.

It was here that the miners struck their first big vein of silver. It was also here that the goblins decided to leave their first message. If the PCs turn over the cart, they find a relatively fresh human skull with a stone axe protruding from a gaping hole in its forehead. Adventurers with knowledge of local goblin lore will recognize this as a symbol of the Skull Crusher tribe.

**3. Collapsed Tunnel.**

> The passage continues west for a short distance, then abruptly ends in a pile of rubble. Assorted mining tools lay scattered about.

This is a dead end.

**4. A Dusty Room.**

> Ahead, the corridor opens into another circular room. Piles of broken rock dot the chamber, and a splintered pick lies near the south wall.

This is where the goblins struck and where the secret door that leads to the goblin complex is located. If the PCs bother to search through the rubble, they will find a number of broken spear shafts and a pool of dried blood under the northern rock pile. All bodies were removed and disposed of in the tunnels.

**5. Goblin Tunnel.**

> The door opens into a small, cramped tunnel no more than 4' wide and 5' high. The passage is roughly dug and proceeds some distance into the mountain. A cold, damp chill fills the rocky tunnel.

This is the PCs' first encounter with the dark domain of the Skull Crusher tribe. Dwarves and gnomes immediately recognize this passage as goblin handiwork. Elves feel uncomfortable away from the light and open spaces. As the PCs proceed into the tunnel, there is a 50% chance per torch carried that a breeze snuffs it out. Impress upon the PCs that the tunnel is tiny. The party must walk in single file, and anyone over 5' tall must slouch, feeling especially confined. (Also remember the combat penalties in such tunnels, described in "Special Features.")

**6. Alarm Room.**

> The passage opens into a rectangular chamber. The floor is sandy, and small rocks litter the area. Carved into the east wall is the leering face of a goblin, the traditional greeting/warning of a goblin lair. Another narrow tunnel, similar to the one by which you arrived, leads out of the west wall.

The west half of the room is a 10'-wide, 6'-deep pit covered by sticks, canvas, and sand. It can be detected by any PC checking for traps, pits, or secret doors. Anyone stepping on the pit must make a dexterity check on 1d20 to avoid falling in. PCs falling into the pit take 1-3 hp falling damage.

If anyone disturbs the pit (whether by falling in or moving the covering), the shrieker at its bottom emits a high-pitched scream, warning the goblin guards in area 7. They, in turn, alert the rest of the Skull Crusher tribe.

**Shrieker:** AC 7; MV 1; HD 3; hp 20; #AT nil; SD noise; AL N; MM1/87.

**7. First Guard Room.** The condition of this room depends on whether the shrieker at area 6 has alerted the guards. If the goblins have been warned, read the section below:

> Ahead is a small square room. A raised iron portcullis hangs in the entrance, and you must duck to pass below it. Inside the room you see a low wooden table with four bowls and a strange, crudely built device on it. A narrow passageway leads out of the west wall. For a moment, you see a pair of red eyes staring back at you from the passageway; then they are gone.

The **goblin** (hp 6; short sword) who peeked from the passage has been sent to lure the intruders farther into the tunnels. When he ducked out of sight, he went through the secret passage in the hall.

If the guards have not been alerted, read the following:

> Ahead is small square room with a narrow exit in the west wall. The room is dimly lit by a single torch that casts ominous shadows around the crude chamber. The entrance is blocked by a light portcullis. Through the bars you can see four goblins sitting around a low wooden table. They seem to be playing a game and are unaware of your presence. As you watch, one goblin places a rat's skull upon a square wooden platform. Above the platform is a rock attached by a thick rope to a wooden arm. The goblin smiles viciously as his cronies chuckle and place copper pieces on the table. He pulls a lever and the rock smashes the skull, crushing it with one blow. Curses and cheers are heard, and copper changes hands.

If the PCs have no light and are very quiet, they can sneak back down the passage without disturbing the four **goblins** (hp 6, 4 (×2), 2; one club each). If, however, the PCs have a light source with them, the goblins notice them as soon as they pay off their wagers.

Once the goblins become aware of the PCs, they run out of the room through the western tunnel. Half the goblins try to disappear into the secret door located on the right, 10' into the corridor. The other goblins take up a defensive position in the low, cramped tunnel just outside of area 7. If any goblin successfully escapes, the entire dungeon is alerted to the intruders.

If the PCs decide to attack the goblins, the party gets one round of missile fire with surprise and one additional round as the goblins flee into the western passage. During these two rounds, the PCs can attack with only magic or missile weapons because of the lowered portcullis. The only way into the room is for someone to make his bend bars/lift gates roll, or by means of magic; either method allows entry to the room after two rounds.

A wheel on the east wall can be turned to raise or lower the iron gate. Because of its location, the wheel cannot be seen from outside the room. It takes one round to raise or lower the gate using the wheel.

**8. Corridor of Traps.**

> After the bend, the tunnel stretches on for another 40', ending in wooden double doors.

This corridor is nothing but a series of hidden pit traps. Each of the pits is 5' wide and 10' deep, filled with wooden stakes. Any PC stepping on a pit must make a dexterity check on 1d20 to avoid falling in. Each PC falling into a pit takes 1-6 hp falling damage and is impaled by 0-3 (1d4–1) spikes. Each spike does 1-6 hp additional damage and has a 10% chance of causing a random disease, as per the *Dungeon Masters Guide*, page 14. Trap, pit, and secret door detection rolls apply here.

> The doors appear to be made of thick oak. A single iron pull-ring is located in the center of each door. The door hinges are on your side, so the doors should open southward.

These doors are trapped. If opened, a rope on each door pulls on a rock that is carefully balanced on a thick board. The rock then falls from the board to strike a sheet-metal drum in room 8A. The trap is undetectable without magical means. If the goblins weren't alerted before, they are now (the noise can be heard in areas 7 and 11A).

**9. Warning Sign.**

> The passage you are following ends in a small alcove. Several strange runes are carved into the stone of the east wall.

There is a locked goblin door in the east wall. If anyone can read goblin, the message printed on the door warns: "Bone slappers. Knee breakers. Skin rakers." This is a standard goblin warning that means, "Don't go here. It's dangerous." The goblins left this message here after the first scouting party they sent down the eastern tunnel met the current occupants of area 10.

**10. The Stirge Room.**

> Beyond the rune-covered door, you see a passage that is even smaller and more cramped than those you previously traveled. With some difficulty, you navigate the passage and emerge into a large rectangular chamber made of fitted stone. The walls are smooth and polished, although apparently quite ancient. To the north is a small alcove, to the east a passageway. The chamber appears to be some sort of temple, but to what deity you cannot guess. In the center of the room is an ornate fountain filled with dark, stagnant water. Rising out of the fountain is a statue. A figure is sprawled upon the floor near the fountain.

This ancient chamber was discovered by the goblins when they were digging this fortress. They were curious about its construction but wary of disturbing whatever old gods this temple once served. Before they could explore further, the goblins met the current residents of the chamber.

Three stirges fly out of the fountain when the PCs approach, followed by the rest of the "flock" swooping down from above one round later. These creatures nest within the jutting stonework of the domed ceiling, leaving through air holes at night to feed. There are five such holes, each 1' wide and extending up for 30' to the ground above, apparently dug out by animals. The form on the floor is the shriveled, bloodless husk of an unfortunate goblin who carries only 5 cp in a ratskin pouch.

**Stirges** (18): AC 8; MV 3/18; HD 1+1; hp 5 (×10), 3 (×4), 1 (×4); #AT 1; THAC0 19; Dmg 1-3; SA drain blood; AL N; MM1/92-93.

The statue in the fountain is of a humanlike cleric with piercing eyes and sharp features. She wears robes emblazoned with intricate patterns. In one three-fingered hand, the cleric holds an ornate scroll case. If the PCs spend one round searching, they discover that the case is not stone and can be removed. It is locked, but a thief or magical spell can open it. The case contains a clerical scroll with the following spells: *protection from evil, 10' radius; cure disease; cure serious wounds.*

**10A. Someone's Home.** This alcove is now the residence of a sandling. This mass of sliding, moving sand is quite territorial and defends its home (the alcove) against all intruders. The creature is invisible to infravision. It has three children that do not attack. It crawled here through the ceiling holes several weeks ago, undisturbed by the stirges.

**Sandling:** AC 3; MV 12(6); HD 4; hp 23; #AT 1; THAC0 17; Dmg 2-16; SD spell immunities; AL N; MM2/106.

**Young sandlings** (3): AC 3; MV 6(3); HD 1; hp 5, 4, 3; #AT nil; SD spell immunities; AL N; MM2/106.

**10B. Dead End.** This 10'-long passage is a collapsed tunnel. The walls are carved with strange glowing runes that cannot be read by any means. Sticking out of the fallen stones that block the tunnel is a three-fingered hand in an old gauntlet. The metal of the glove is of a quality and make unknown to current technology. Clutched in the hand is a *ring of water breathing.* If the PCs spend four hours digging up the skeleton, they find a humanoid of unknown race and origin clad in crushed and unusable armor. (DM's note: This encounter is included for flavor and demonstrates the long history of these tunnels. Feel free to develop this ancient race further or to leave it as an unsolved mystery.)

**11. Riverbed,** and **11A. Spy Chamber.**

> Ahead, the passage becomes a short, steep staircase leading down 15' to a four-way intersection. Directly across from you, an identical staircase leads up. Running east and west is an unusual 10'-wide passage. Its 15'-high ceiling, floor, and walls are of a slick, light-gray material like glazed ceramic. On the walls, from 10' above the floor to the ceiling, a luminous moss grows. The dividing line between moss and slick gray rock is very precise. A gentle breeze blows from east to west. From the west passage, you hear a low whistling sound.

This passage is the goblin-carved bed of an underground river. From area 13, the goblins control the flow of water along this course. If the goblins are not alerted, the PCs may walk along the riverbed in either direction in relative safety. However, if the goblins are alerted, the party is watched by three **goblin guards** (AC 5; hp 7, 5, 4; one short bow and 12 arrows each; the 7-hp goblin has a drum) in area 11A, a chamber separated by a 1'-thick wall from the corridor and whose floor is 10' above the riverbed floor. The guards react to the PCs' actions as follows:

—If the PCs head west along the riverbed, the goblins wait until the party is out of their infravision range (90'), then they return to area 13 and release the water (see areas 12 and 13 for details).

—If the PCs head east or split up, the guards beat their warning drum, signaling the goblins in area 13 to release the water immediately.

—If the PCs go up the north stairway, the guards run to area 13 immediately and tell the goblins there to release the water (the goblins will not beat the drum in this case).

—If the PCs go back up the stairs to the south, the goblins do nothing but wait. If the adventurers don't return after four hours, the goblins send two from their group to scout. If the scouting party fails to return, the goblins wait another 12

hours and then send out another scouting party. If the second scouting party fails to return, the goblins release the river and seal off the staircase at area 11. If the PCs return to find a raging river, they may assume that the trouble with the goblins is over and the mine can reopen. Two weeks later, however, the miners are again greeted in the typical Skull Crusher fashion.

—If the PCs find the 3" × 6" spy slit that leads to area 11A (it is 12' above the floor and cannot be found by someone sighting from the floor without the use of magic to detect traps—or lots of light and the right skills), the goblins flee to area 13 and release the water.

See area 12 for further details.

**12. The Basin.**

> The slick-floored passage you are walking along ends in a large, 30'-round natural chamber. From the ceiling hang great brown-red stalactites. Water drips slowly from the spikes, causing a pinging echo in the circular room. The floor of the chamber is like a bowl, with sloping sides that are lightly grooved. At the lowest, central point of the floor is a 5'-wide opening. Air rushing out of the corridor and down the hole in the floor makes an eerie whistling sound.

If the goblins are not alerted, this seems like an odd but safe chamber. Because of the slickness of the floor, anyone walking into the room must make a dexterity check on 1d20 to avoid slipping and sliding down into the hole. Adventurers who maintain their balance and look down the hole see nothing but inky blackness. Should any PC fall into the hole, read the "Swept Away" description's relevant parts, starting with a 20' fall to a horizontal passage leading west for several hundred feet.

If the goblins are alerted, read the following to the players:

> Suddenly, the eerie whistling is broken by the roar of distant thunder. The walls and floor shake as some tremendous force rushes toward you.

The sound the adventurers hear is a great wall of water rushing down the passage toward them. Ask each PC what he is doing at this time. Anyone who immediately states he is running back up the passage to the stairs has a chance of reaching them if his movement speed is high enough and if he is close enough to the stairs. The water floods through the passage, making the intersection at area 11 too deep to ford after only one round. Thus, a character with a base movement rate of 12 who states he is running for the stairs must be within 120' of the steps in order to reach them in one round. (Dwarves who happen to be in area 12 when the water is released are out of luck without magical assistance to their movements!) Each running PC must also make a dexterity check on 1d20 to avoid falling on the slick floor, in which case he is caught by the water.

Other actions are possible, of course, aside from running. The PCs must act at once in order to save themselves in some way. For any PC who doesn't reach the stairs, read the following:

> The thunder grows louder and seems to be getting closer. The floor vibrates, and the breeze from the passage is turning cooler and stronger. Suddenly, you can see a great wall of water coming toward you from the far end of the passage!

The PCs are in trouble. If they can't think of a way to stop the water, escape it, or rise above it, they will be swept away down the hole. Because of the wall's slickness, anyone attempting to climb walls has a 25% penalty to his chance of success.

For PCs who manage to rise 10' above the floor, read:

> No sooner are you to safety than the wall of water passes beneath you and into the chamber. There, the water rushes around the room in a great whirlpool, disappearing into the hole in the center of the floor. Gradually, the initial rush of water subsides, but still a steady, swift current flows beneath you.

At this point, patience is the key. Any attempts to climb along the moss-covered walls meet with failure, and the PCs fall into the swift-moving river. If the PCs wait, the river stops flowing 10 minutes after the flood began. The corridor slowly empties, and the party is able to walk safely again.

**Swept Away**

Check with each PC who is struck by the water to find out his last action. If the PC took a deep breath, use the following breath-holding durations without modification. Otherwise, cut all such times in half, though allowing a one-round minimum time for any PC to hold his breath.

For PCs who fall into the river and are carried away, read the following (modify slightly for those who slip into the hole in area 12 if the river is not flowing):

> You are swept wildly along by the raging torrent. Ahead of you is a swirling whirlpool directly over the hole in the chamber floor. In moments, you are dragged down into the funnel. Over and over you fall and spin as you are hurled along a mighty underground river. Finally, your lungs and body aching, you are thrown into calm water in complete darkness—but you are sinking, pulled down by your clothing, armor, and weapons!

The sinking lasts only a moment for any PC not so heavily encumbered that he cannot float. The PCs have traveled an underground river that empties into an underground lake just a few hundred feet from the mine. A PC who has taken a deep breath can hold his breath underwater for a number of rounds equal to his constitution score divided by three (rounded up). Strenuous activity or lack of a deep breath cuts this time in half, but any character can hold his breath for at least one round (see the *Wilderness Survival Guide*, page 43, or the *Dungeoneer's Survival Guide*, page 12). The trip through the tunnel to the lake takes one round.

The lake itself is in complete darkness, and it is 30' deep where the river pours into it from a 10'-wide hole in a cave wall only 3' above the surface of the lake. The walls of the cave, as well as the river tunnel, are rough enough for a swimmer to grasp and hold himself up. Once the water flow has ceased, survivors may crawl back up the tunnel to area 12 (though they must negotiate a 20' vertical climb immediately below area 12).

Details on the underground lake are left to the DM to devise; this area could open up into a vast cavern network under the earth for future exploration. See area 21 for other details; the river described in that section enters the lake

some 300' from the emptying point of area 12, and PCs in the lake can easily hear the waterfall's roar from this area.

Any items shed sink to the bottom of the lake. There is only a 50% chance of finding them in the muck of the lake bed. PCs must make a strength check on 5d6 to avoid losing any items they were carrying when they were swept down the tunnel.

**13. The River Gate.** If the goblins have not been alerted, read the following to the players:

> This is a large chamber built over a 15'-deep dry channel. A stone plate seals the watercourse from whatever lies beyond the east wall. A huge wheel is located in the northern section of the room, and a bridge spans the smooth channel. Six human males are chained to the wall beside the wheel, watched over by four goblin guards.

This chamber is immediately adjacent to a vast underground river. A 1'-thick (but very solid) wall separates the chamber from the river cavern beyond it. Anyone who successfully makes a listening roll can hear a faint roaring of water beyond the east wall (see area 21 for more details on the river).

The slaves are captured townsfolk, a combination of miners and Sergeant Fornd's men. If, however, the goblins have been alerted, the PCs find the room empty. The goblins have taken their human slaves to area 14.

The goblins can control the flow of the underground river by raising and lowering the stone plate (A) via the wheel. This plate is normally closed, sealing the river outside the main complex. But when the goblins need a fresh supply of fish or wish to activate their river trap, the humans are forced to turn the wheel. This raises the stone plate and floods the dry river bed. The humans also catch fish for the goblins when this channel is flooded, using nets that hang on the wall.

**Slaves** (6): AC 10; MV 12; zero-level humans; hp 4 each; #AT 1; THAC0 20; Dmg by weapon type (unarmed); AL various good.

**Goblins** (4): hp 5 (×2), 4 (×2); one club and one dagger each.

**14. The Prison.**

> This long corridor is lined with small cells along the south wall. There are four such cells, each sealed by a 2"-thick barred wooden door with only a small hole for a window.

If the fortress has not been alerted, this room is empty except for cell A, which is occupied by Sergeant Fornd of Tallow's Post. He was captured in the mine and flung into this cell. Fornd knows little of the goblin outpost but agrees to aid the party if freed. He has no armor or weapons.

If the fortress is alerted, the slaves and guards from area 13 are here as well.

**Sergeant Fornd:** AC 10; MV 12; F3; hp 12; #AT 1; THAC0 18; Dmg by weapon type (unarmed); AL LG.

A goblin tunnel leads south and west to area 11A. Another tunnel leads north to area 15.

**15. Food Storage.**

> This cool stone chamber is lined with shelves and filled with various foodstuffs. Some things you cannot identify, and others you hope are not what they appear to be. Much of the supply is moldy and rotting. Two kegs sit against the north wall.

There is nothing of importance in this room.

**16. The Worg Den.**

> This large stone chamber is dimly lit through two cracks in the ceiling. At the milky-white pool of water in the northwest corner, a worg lowers its head to drink. Scattered about the room are many more worgs, resting on nests of mossy grass. In the far corner, a mother worg plays with a worg pup.

**Worgs** (15 adults): AC 6; MV 18; HD 4+4; hp 21 (×5), 19 (×4), 17 (×3), 13 (×3); #AT 1; THAC0 17; Dmg 2-8; AL NE; MM1/101. The pup has 1 hp and does 1 hp damage with its bite (THAC0 20); it is AC 8 and has MV 9.

Even if the worgs cannot see the PCs, they can smell the PCs and are surprised only on a roll of 1 on 1d12. Once the worgs are alerted to intruders, the battle is sure and swift. The worgs give no quarter, nor do they flee.

A 10'-high tunnel carved by goblins leads west out from this area, extending 150' before exiting to the south some 200' or so from area 1, but 150' higher on the mountain slope. The exit from this tunnel is covered with bushes in such a way that it cannot be seen from area 1, but it might be found if the PCs make a determined search of the area before entering area 1. Allow a 5% chance per turn of searching (noncumulative) for a PC to find this opening, but allow this only if the players announce their PCs are searching up the slope. The opening itself is only 3' across.

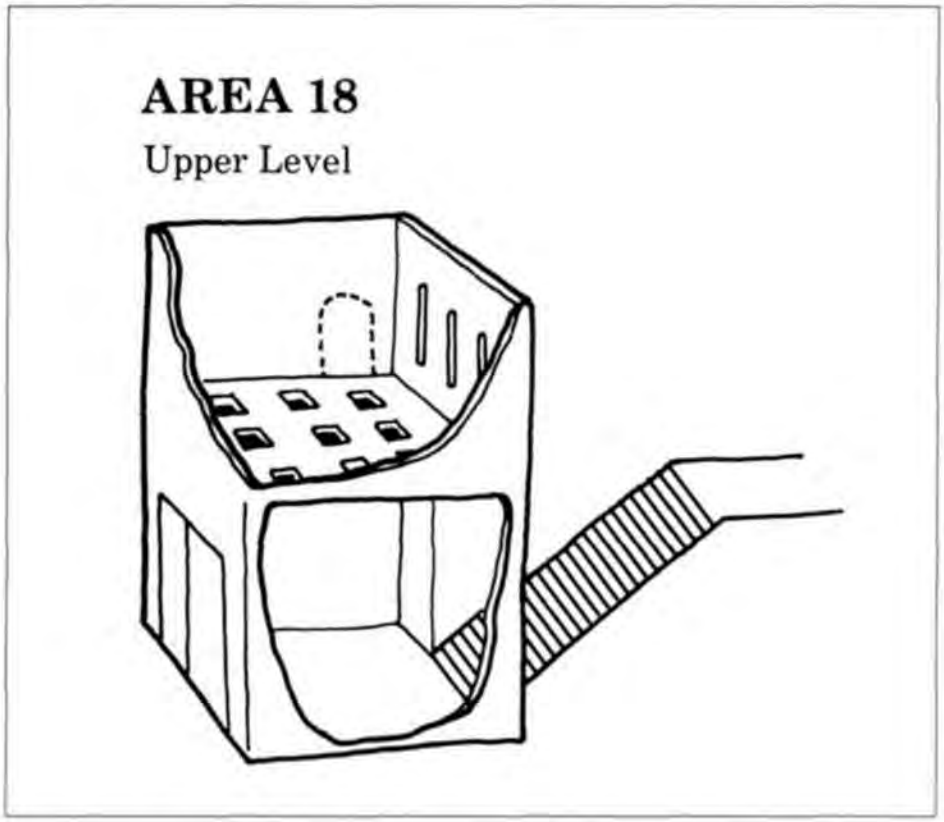
If the goblins were previously alerted, the worgs are notified and are made to scout around outside (leaving through the western tunnel) to see if the PCs brought any horses or other gear. If the PCs left any animals or hirelings within 200 yards of the mine's main entrance, the worgs attack them with intent to slay and eat them. The DM must play out this fight as seen fit. Other equipment (weighing 50 lbs. or less) is carried by worg-mouth to area 16A.

### The Shaded Areas

The PCs are about to enter the main trap section, shaded gray on the map (areas 17-25). The descriptions given assume that the goblins have been alerted to the PCs' presence. If the party has been clever and the goblins are still not aware of intruders, all rooms in this area are completely unguarded. As such, this section is defended only by random patrols. Areas should be described without references to their goblin inhabitants.

While the PCs are exploring this section, roll 1d6 for random encounters every game turn. On a roll of 1, a goblin patrol is encountered. This patrol consists of six **goblins** (hp 7, 3 (×3), 2 (×2); one spear and one short sword each) from area 26. Their leader (the goblin with 7 hp) carries a horn in order to alert the complex if necessary. One goblin in the patrol carries a torch and may be spotted from a distance. Likewise, the patrol could spot the PCs' light source. The sound made by a goblin's horn carries for 200' underground; subtract 50' for every door the sound must penetrate.

If a patrol leader manages to sound his horn and alert other goblins, treat all further rooms as alerted. Traps and rooms are now all manned, and those that were easily navigated or sprung earlier are reset and all the more dangerous.




**17. Hallway Intersection.**

If the PCs were detected by the goblins at area 11, read the following:

> As you ponder which direction to take, your thoughts are interrupted by a low rumbling sound from the south. You move to the staircase to determine the cause of the sound and see the east-west passage you recently crossed fill with a dark, rushing river. In the distance you hear the sound of a drum, slow and rhythmic—like a heartbeat.

The river in the east-west passage is 10' deep and very swift. It is impossible for anyone to swim across, but the party could navigate the crossing by means of magic (*water walk, fly,* or *levitate* spells).

The goblins in room 11A know how many invaders have entered their tunnels. They beat their drum and keep the river flowing until all invaders have been captured or killed by the goblin horde.

If the PCs have somehow gotten past the goblins at area 11A without alerting them, read the following to the players:

> You come to a T-intersection. To your left is a narrow passageway. To your right, the corridor is wider and continues on until it fades into darkness. You can see a single opening on the north side of the eastern corridor.

**18. Death From Above.**

> As you walk down the hall, you see that the corridor continues for 30' and then becomes a staircase leading down toward a pair of wooden doors. Suddenly, the silence is broken by the twang of several bows. There are goblins firing at you from arrow slits located above the stairs.

Six **goblins** (hp 5 (×2), 4 (×2), 2 (×2)) are located in a room above the staircase (see diagram). Two goblins have one dagger each and control the traps. The four goblins with short bows and 12 arrows each shoot at the PCs until two of the goblins are dead. Shooting these goblins is going to be difficult for the PCs, as the goblins are firing through narrow slits (+6 bonus to armor class). These archers are here to force the PCs to rush unthinkingly down the stairs toward the wooden doors. The arrow slits aren't angled downward, so the goblins are unable to fire at the PCs while the latter are on the stairs. The slits may be detected as traps by anyone with enough light and the proper skills or with the proper magic.

If a PC successfully attempts to find traps before stepping off the stairs, he notices the points of a crude portcullis protruding from the ceiling above the bottom step. PCs who stop on the stairs and peer ahead may roll to detect traps again (if this can be done). Those who make their rolls notice murder slits in the ceiling.

The goblins wait patiently above for the PCs to set off the gate trap. The double doors pull open normally but reveal only a stone wall. When the doors are opened, however, the gate comes crashing down. Any PC standing directly under the gate must make a dexterity check to avoid being struck by the gate. Anyone hit by the falling gate takes 2-12 hp damage and is pinned beneath the gate, taking 1 hp damage per round thereafter until the gate is lifted.

Once the gate has been dropped, the goblins begin their attack. First, they open the bottom on a cage of 12 giant centipedes that sits over two of the murder holes, letting them all fall down the holes onto the PCs. This takes two rounds; the centipedes begin to attack on the third round. On the fourth round, the goblins begin shooting arrows through the murder holes at the PCs. The goblins continue to attack until four of the six are dead. Once this happens, the goblins run away to report what has happened. If the PCs are still trapped below, the goblins return with 10 reinforcements (with the same statistics) after eight rounds. PCs may use their bend bars/lift gates rolls to escape the trap.

**Giant centipedes** (12): AC 9; MV 15; HD ¼; hp 2 (×6), 1 (×6); #AT 1; THAC0 20; Dmg nil; SA poison; AL N; MM1/14.

**19. Pit of Spikes.**

> As you turn the corner, the passage widens to a more comfortable girth. Ahead of you is a 10'-long, 8'-wide, 10'-deep pit full of dark, brackish water, out of which rises a carpet of gleaming dagger-size spikes. On

either side of the pit is a narrow walkway. Beyond the pit, a narrow side passage opens to the west at the end of the tunnel.

The pit's bottom is actually just an inch below the surface of the water. There is enough room to navigate through the spikes if a PC is careful and makes a dexterity roll on 1d20 at +4.

On either side of the pit corridor (connected by a 3'-wide tunnel that runs around the pit) are two guardrooms, each manned by four **goblins** (AC 7; hp 3 each; one spear each). These goblins guard this section of the outpost. The wall between the pit and the guardrooms is pierced by a number of 3"-diameter concealed holes. The goblin's orders are to jab their spears through the slits to push intruders off the walkway and into the pit.

If a PC examines the walls adjacent to the pit, he can find these holes by rolling to find traps. Any PC looking through one of these holes sees a red, beady eye looking back—followed two seconds later by a spear point.

PCs moving along the walkway and unaware of the holes (or not taking any precautions) are attacked by the goblins at +3 to hit in the first round. PCs who take precautions are attacked at normal odds. In addition to 1-6 hp spear damage, any PC hit must make a dexterity check on 1d20 at -2 to avoid tumbling into the pit. Adventurers who fall into the pit are impaled by 0-5 (1d6-1) spikes, each doing 1-4 hp damage, and take 1-6 hp falling damage as well. The sides of the pit are smooth, placing a -30% penalty on all climbing rolls.

The goblins cannot be attacked except by weapons such as spears, arrows, etc., but each has a +6 bonus to his armor class. The walls between the guardrooms and the pit corridor are 1' thick.

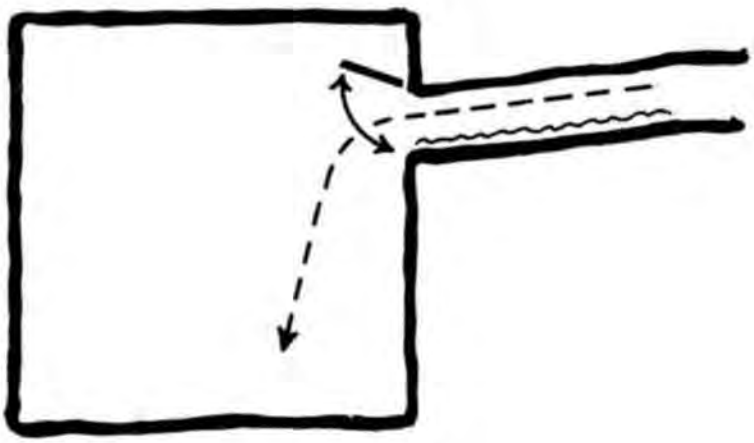
**20. Dark Passage.**

The narrow passageway you have been traveling opens out to the north and becomes 20' wide for 40' of its length. You can continue to walk along the south half of the corridor, but the northern half is a 10'×40' pool of dark water.

If any PC enters the pool, read the following:

## AREA 22

### Side View



As you enter the pool, you notice two things. The first is that the water is extremely cold. The second is that something just bumped your leg.

This pool of water is 4' deep and very cold. The goblins keep live, blind, albino cave fish in the pool for later consumption, and the water and fish are quite harmless. The water is there to keep intruders away from the north wall, where concealed arrow slits have been carved to blend in with the stone. Any PC who makes a roll to detect traps notices these openings.

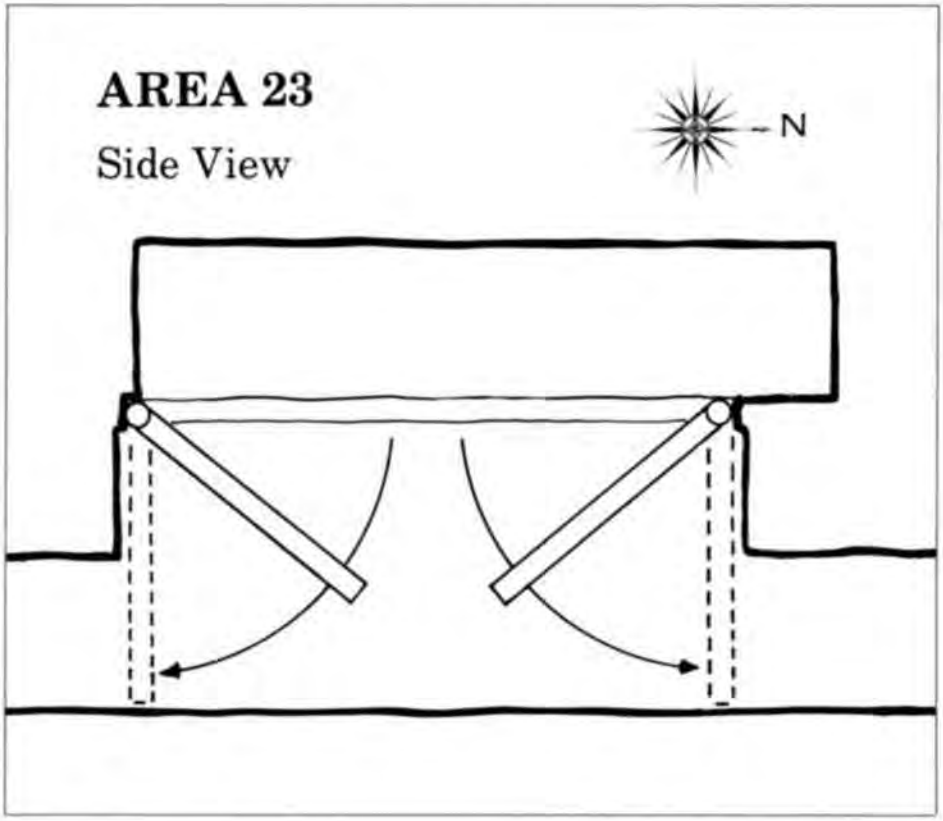
Twelve **goblins** (AC 7; hp 4 (×6), 3 (×6); one short bow and 12 arrows each) man the arrow slits (three slits per 10' section). If the arrow slits haven't been detected, the goblins wait until the PCs reach the center of the room before opening fire. No more than four goblins may fire at one PC in a single round because of the narrow field of fire offered by the arrow slits.

The goblins gain a +6 bonus to their armor classes against missile fire while in this area. Once six of the goblins have been killed, the remaining goblins panic and flee.

**21. The Ledge.**

The tunnel ends here in a cliff that overlooks a vast underground river. The water runs swiftly, creating a cool breeze in the great cavern. The river is about 30' wide and flows several feet below the ledge, heading north at a rapid rate.

This is a place of relative safety where the PCs can rest and take time to think. The goblins are afraid of the ledge and will not approach unless severely threatened by their leader, Grishog. Anyone who falls into the river here is deposited in the underground lake described in area 12 ("Swept Away"), in just the same manner as previously noted. The river is flowing north, but it curves to the west as it goes. Any PC in the river reaches the lake in two rounds.




**22. The Rat Room.**

The tunnel passage, dug directly from the living stone, is cramped and close. You can walk only in single file, and even so, the larger members of your group are uncomfortable at best. As you approach a bend in the tunnel you stop, startled. The expression on the face of the goblin looking back at you reflects your own. But before you can navigate in the confined space, the small humanoid vanishes around the bend, out of the glare of your torchlight. You peek around the tunnel bend and see that the passage opens some 20' ahead into a 10'-wide area. A pair of double doors stands closed at the end of the passage. The goblin is nowhere to be seen.

This goblin is encountered whether or not the complex has been alerted. He escapes through the secret door in the east wall of the corridor, moving too quickly to be caught.

The final 20' of this passage has a sloping floor of polished stone covered in a sweet-smelling mixture of honey and molasses. Under this goo is a layer of oil. PCs lose their footing on this slippery surface unless they each pass a dexterity check on 1d20 at +4 every 10'. A fallen PC slides across the angled floor and becomes covered in goo. At the end of the passage, the PC's weight pushes open the doors, which are actually quite light and hinged at the top (see diagram). The adventurer falls 20' to land on the floor of a 30'×30' chamber (22A), taking 3-18 hp falling damage.

For those PCs who have fallen into area 22A, read the following:

You are in a 30'×30' chamber. Bones litter the floor, and large cracks open into the rough-hewn walls. As you try to get your bearings and wipe off the goo that covers your armor and clothing, you suddenly realize you are being watched. Dozens of pairs of eyes glare hungrily at you from the dark crevices. Then they begin to move.

The eyes belong to giant rats, kept hungry by the goblins and attracted by the sweet smell of the gooey mixture on the floor. In the first round, 1-20 of the creatures attack each PC furiously. If any PC enters the maze of tunnels beyond the cracked walls, he meets 1-4 rats every round until he encounters a total of 20 more. Only dwarf-size characters and smaller can enter the maze, and they can fight only one at a time within the tunnels, at –4 to hit. Rats can attack from above, below, beside, and in front of the party within the tunnels. Lying in the rat lair (at area B) is a *short sword +1*.

**Giant rats:** AC 7; MV 12//6; HD ½; hp 3 each; #AT 1; THAC0 20; Dmg 1-3; SA disease; AL N; MM1/81.

**23. The Gate Trap.**

Before you, the passage widens into a lengthy 30'×40' chamber whose ceiling rises to a height of 20'. A passageway leads out of the room directly across from where you stand. The chamber is barren save for a small pile of stones in the center of the room.

If a PC states that he is examining the ceiling, he has a 20% chance to notice that the ceiling appears to be covered in canvas. In fact, it is a false ceiling composed of two metal gates covered in rough, dirty canvas that looks like rock from below.

When the PCs reach the center of the chamber, hidden goblins above release the gates, which swing down to cover the doors and seal the party into the room (see diagram). Any PC standing in the room within 10' of one of the entrances must make a dexterity check on 1d20 to avoid being struck by a closing gate. Those who fail their checks take 2-12 hp damage and are thrown outside the room. Adventurers who make their rolls are trapped inside the room with the others. Once the trap is sprung, the PCs can see the entire room.

In a matter of seconds, both entrances are sealed with a great echoing crash. Above you, the chamber rises beyond the false ceiling. A 4'-wide walkway can be seen running around the length and width of the room, and standing on that walkway are numerous goblins with nocked bows.

**Goblins** (18): AC 7; hp 4 (×6), 3 (×4), 2 (×8); short bows, 24 arrows each.

After the goblins' first missile volley, roll for initiative. The goblins continue to fire round after round of arrows at the party until 10 goblins have been killed or the party surrenders. Once 10 goblins are dead, the remaining goblins flee through the nearest door.

Because of the gates' enormous size, anyone attempting to lift them has a −15% penalty to his bend bars/lift gates roll. Another way to lift the gates is to use the control wheels at the west side of the upper walkway. Two persons working together can turn a wheel to raise one gate in three rounds. One person alone must make an open-doors roll to successfully turn a wheel and lift a gate (only one such roll allowed per PC).

To reach the gate controls, someone must climb up to the ledge. This can be accomplished by a thief climbing the wall or by climbing up one of the canvas-covered closed gates. Climbing a gate is simple, requiring no roll and taking two rounds.

**24. The Chimney.**

This was a natural chamber further shaped by goblin chisels. Blue-green stalagmites and stalactites cover the floor and ceiling, respectively. Small pools of water dot the floor. At the far end of the room is a 4'-diameter opening in the ceiling, next to the northwest corner.

The PCs find nothing unusual in the room until they approach the opening in the ceiling. As they draw near the hole, they notice that a number of handholds have been cut into the stone walls at the corner.

This opening is actually a natural stone chimney that the goblins use to connect the first and second levels of their complex. The chimney goes straight up for almost 30' to exit in room 24A. From the room above, two **goblins** (AC 7; hp 6 each; one short bow and 12 arrows each) peer down into the room below using their 90' infravision. The moment they see any heat in area 24, they fire their arrows. If a PC stands beneath the opening and looks up, read the following:

Above you, the opening becomes a tunnel leading straight up. The handholds on the wall continue all the way up this natural stone chimney. It appears that the chimney ends in another chamber 30' above. You notice two pairs of red eyes peering at you from the upper chamber—then you hear the twang of goblin bows.

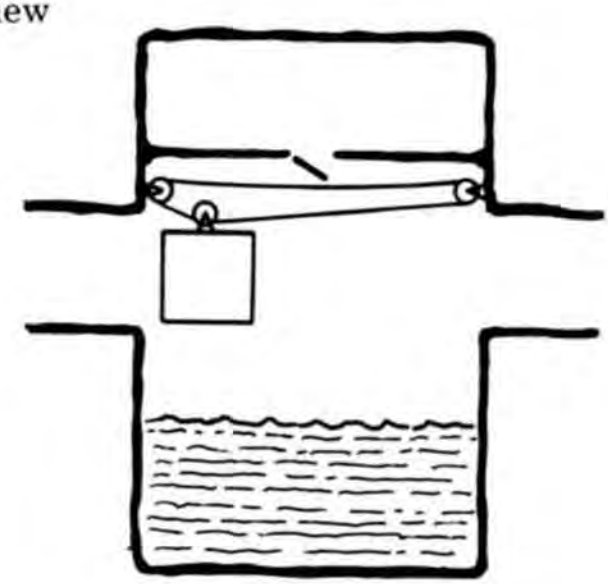
After this initial volley, the goblins put aside their bows. On every third round thereafter, one of the goblins risks a quick glance down the shaft to see if anyone is climbing up.

The goblins wait until any climbing PC is 10' from the top before pushing a large rock into the chimney. A PC in the chimney must make a dexterity roll on 1d20 at −8 to avoid being struck for 2-12 hp damage. In addition, any PC struck by the rock must make a strength check on 1d20 at −5 to avoid falling down the chimney and taking an additional 6-36 hp damage.

The goblins have only two large rocks, but they continue to guard the passage with their bows until a PC is almost to the top. Then they slip out of the room through the secret passage in the north wall.

## AREA 25

Side View



**25. The Water Room.**

Ahead of you, the east-west tunnel opens into a cavern, but there is no floor at this level. Something moves beneath the surface of the still water that fills the room to within 10' of the ledge you stand upon. An opening across the pool to the east indicates that the tunnel continues, but the only way to navigate the expanse without spells is a 10'-square, 6'-high, metal-framed cage attached to heavy ropes and operated by a pulley.

The cage is a barred construction, open on two ends, that is suspended from ropes at the top. The ropes are stretched between two pulleys that are secured to the wall on both ends of the expanse (see diagram). The ropes pass within the cage and can be pulled to move the vehicle to the other side.

Though the easily detected presence of goblin footprints around this area shows the cage is well used, it is also a trap. Anyone who successfully detects traps on the cage notices that there are two heavy, spring-mounted cage doors set to

each side of the openings into the cage. The doors, if properly triggered, will snap shut and seal the cage.

If the goblins were alerted and PCs attempt to use the cage, the cage jerks to a halt halfway across the pool, stopped by wooden blocks knotted onto the rope. A trapdoor opens in the ceiling, and a hook on a 15' wooden pole is lowered by four **goblins** (AC 7; hp 4 each; one club each) hidden in the area above. With the hook, the goblins can trigger the cage doors to shut in one round; the cage doors can be opened by magic or by a successful bend bars/lift gates roll. However, the goblins next attempt to detach the rope from one of the side pulleys, thus dropping the cage into the water. This maneuver takes 3-6 rounds. There are narrow openings in the north and south walls that lead out of the upper chamber.

In the water lives an albino, subterranean giant eel that is quite irritable. It quickly attacks anything that enters its domain. However, there is a 20% chance that the falling cage will hit the eel and do 3-18 hp damage to it (and that will really make it mad!).

**Giant eel:** AC 6; MV 9; HD 5; hp 35; #AT 1; THAC0 15; Dmg 3-18; AL N; MM1/36.

**26. The Guardroom.**

> This appears to be a barracks for the goblins. Along the southern wall, numerous cots (several of which are occupied) are arranged in a somewhat orderly fashion. A banner hangs on the north wall; it depicts a skull crushed by an axe that juts from its gleaming dome.

This is where the goblins assigned to this section of the outpost live and where the random patrols originate. The 10 off-duty **goblins** (AC 7; hp 7, 5 (×5), 3 (×2), 1 (×2); one short sword each) engage the PCs until half the goblins' number are killed; then they flee to area 19A. If the goblins were alerted, they have time to pull their shields from under their beds (AC 6) and set up a defensive wall with the beds, slowing the PCs' passage through the room.

Among the goblins' prized possessions, the PCs can find a stuffed rat on a stick, 54 cp, assorted bone jewelry, and a 50-gp ruby hidden under a cot.

**27. Crush the Skull Arena.**

> The door opens into a chamber lit only by whatever light you have brought with you—and that light doesn't reach very far in here. The echoes tell you that the room ahead is huge; the walls and ceiling must be far away. Your light source reveals that the section of floor you can see is divided into 10' squares by lines etched into the stone. Dark stains cover the flat, rune-covered surfaces. From behind, you hear the clang of a gate dropping. Across the room, a 10' opening of light appears in the far wall. A drum begins to beat, and laughter echoes through the darkness above you.

This is a replica of the famed Crush the Skull arena in the goblin's capital city. Grishog so loves the sport that he had his troops build this stadium to satisfy his competitive spirit. There are 30 squares on the floor below 30 hanging boulders. Next to the arena is the control room and gambling hall (area 27A). Goblins love a good game of Crush the Skull and place outlandish bets on the outcomes of matches.

The PCs find that a very heavy steel portcullis has trapped them in the arena. Only magic or a bend bars/lift gates roll (at -25%) will allow escape. The only other way out is through the opening across the vast chamber, 60' away. To get there, they need only dodge the falling boulders and avoid having their skulls crushed.

As the PCs walk through the chamber, their light sources reveal that each floor square is decorated with a different strange symbol. Each time a PC moves into a new square, the goblins drop the boulder suspended from the ceiling 25' above it. The boulders inflict 2-20 hp damage each (THAC0 13). Roll to hit each PC standing in the square when the boulder drops. If hit, a PC can roll a saving throw vs. paralyzation for half damage. Each square bears the symbol of one of the competing goblins. If a PC is hit, loud cheers accompanied by an equally rowdy chorus of boos and hisses fill the arena. In the arena, with huge stones dropping from above, the sounds of the unseen goblins can be very disconcerting. After a stone has dropped over a square, that square may be reentered safely thereafter.

The goblins are protected behind arrow slits that line the south wall of the arena. They control the stones with levers and pulleys located in this area. If the PCs escape the arena, the goblins immediately attack them in the narrow corridor, to prevent any of the PCs from reaching areas 29, 30, and 31.

**Goblins** (30): hp 6 (×6), 5 (×6), 4 (×6), 3 (×6), 2 (×6); those with 4 hp are AC 7 and have one short bow and 12 arrows each, and the rest are AC 6 and have one short sword each (their shields are slung on their backs at the moment).

**28. The Waste Room.**

> This is a small, irregular room that appears to be some sort of garbage dump. Assorted armor, weapons, furniture, clothing, and animal parts are strewn in every direction. Objects glitter here and there from mounds of corroding metal. A chest sits atop one pile, and a long sword is jutting from another.

When any PCs enter the room, a piece of green slime falls from the ceiling toward one PC per round. The goblins use the slime to slowly dissolve their garbage.

One trap on the chest was set off when the goblins tried to open it; three goblins were killed by poison gas. Fearful of more traps, they dumped the chest in here and wrote off whatever treasure it might contain as too dangerous to obtain. A second trap, a poison needle (save vs. poison or die), is hidden in the lock clasp. The chest contains 300 gp. The long sword is nonmagical but in good condition (it was accidentally cast aside with a pile of old animal skins).

**Green slime:** AC 9; MV nil; HD 2; hp 13; #AT 1 drop per round; THAC0 19 (chance to hit by dropping); Dmg special; SA dissolves flesh in 1-4 rounds, destroys metal; SD unharmed by weapons or spells (except fire, cold, and *cure disease*); AL N; MM1/49.

**29. The Common Room.** If the PCs get this far while the fortress is still not alerted, the tables in this room are in an upright position and the goblins are milling about or sleeping. If, as is likely, the fortress has already been alerted, read the following to the players:

> This room is a hodgepodge of scattered bedding, dirty clothing, crude

furniture, and garbage. Tables have been overturned to form a barricade in the northwest corner of the room. Illumination is provided by a single torch stuck in the skull of a great owlbear placed in the center of the chamber. The skull has been picked clean and is resting on a gnarled log. As you scan the room, you notice a small, helmeted head peer at you from behind the table barricade. The silence is punctuated by a single drum beat that sounds every few seconds.

The forms behind the barricade are the 16 **goblins** (hp 4 (×8), 2 (×8); one light crossbow, 12 bolts, and one short sword each) charged with defending the holy shrine of Maglubiyet should any heathen sun-dwellers get this far. When the PCs enter, the goblins attack with their crossbows (gaining +4 bonuses to their armor classes vs. missile fire). They do not draw their swords until absolutely necessary. However, one overzealous goblin screams "Maglubiyet!" and leaps over the barricade at the PCs after the first volley of bolts.

The moment that the goblins are forced to enter hand-to-hand combat with the PCs, they simultaneously let out howling screams as they enter battle—and every worg in area 16 comes to the attack two rounds later.

**30. Maglubiyet's Shrine.**

You can tell a holy place when you see one, even if it is dedicated to some heathen goblin deity. You recognize this place as Maglubiyet's shrine, a vile place of worship devoted to torture and war. The chamber is a natural hollow in the mountain itself. Stalactites and stalagmites fill the room, surrounding a statue of the goblin god, his bloody arms and hands spread before him in anticipation of some dark offering. The jagged floor and ceiling are adorned with the skulls of dwarves, gnomes, and orcs. Implements of war, torture, and trap building are lovingly displayed.

There are four **goblin guards** (AC 5; hp 6 each; one spear each, and one beats a drum) here along with a **goblin shaman** (AC 5; HD 1d8+5d4–1 (casts spells as C6); hp 19; THAC0 17 (as 4–1 HD); scale mail, shield, club; see *Legends & Lore*, pages 90 and 125, and the *DMG*, page 40). The shaman wears a gray-green cloak and a conical hat as well as his armor. He has the following spells: *cause light wounds, darkness, protection from good, chant* (×2), *augury* (used), *dispel magic, cause disease*. The shaman has a 5% chance of spell failure per spell (wisdom 12). He fights to the death to destroy these dangerous intruders who have ruined the Feast of Maglubiyet.

The statue of Maglubiyet is the focal point of the Skull Crushers' worship services. The idol has a powerful evil aura and constantly radiates *protection from good* (per the spell). If touched by anyone of lawful-good alignment, the statue inflicts 1-10 hp damage. The statue is AC –1 and takes 100 hp to destroy.

Behind the statue is a secret compartment in the floor where the sacred treasures of Maglubiyet are kept. The compartment can be found by a normal roll to find secret doors. Inside are the following: 339 gp, 1,112 sp, 432 cp, an ornate bone club decorated with a slightly flawed opal (value 300 gp), and a *staff of curing* (eight charges).

**31. The Great Hall of Grishog.**

You enter the short hall beyond the secret door and see that it opens into a gigantic, hollowed-out chamber. The area is lit by a single 10'-diameter stone brazier in the center of the room. The blazing fire within lights only the central area. In the shadowy reaches, great stone formations rise from floor to ceiling. These natural pillars have been removed from the central area, thus creating a huge meeting hall.

Across from you, on the other side of the fire, is a great stone throne decorated with bleached skulls and dyed pelts. Seated upon the throne is a rather small goblin wearing an oversized crown of polished silver and a bearskin cape. His left hand rests upon the pommel of a gigantic bastard sword. A great shield leans against the throne beside it. Two worgs sit beside an ornate chest at his feet, their crimson eyes watching your every move. Around the throne, an honor guard of 15 goblins stands at the ready, their weapons poised.

The creature on the throne—small even by goblin standards—is **Gunth** (AC 7; hp 3; dagger—he cannot wield the sword or shield), Grishog's steward. Gunth is currently out of favor for spilling the lieutenant's special brew during a party held days ago to celebrate the conquest of the mine. Gunth now has the "honor" of greeting the PCs and acting as bait. The 15 **goblin guards** (AC 7; hp 3 (×8), 2 (×4), 1 (×3)) have one club each. The **worgs** have 14 hp each (see area 16 for their statistics).

The object of this grand diversion is to draw the PCs into the chamber. Gunth has orders to attack these powerful invaders, and Grishog has promised that he will order the main goblin force to join the battle. However, Grishog plans to allow the PCs to defeat Gunth, thus making the party overconfident. He has no intention of aiding his clumsy steward.

Grishog and the main force of goblins and worgs are in area 31A, a secret corridor that surrounds the main chamber. They watch the main chamber through concealed holes, waiting for the PCs to enter the room and for Gunth to carry out his orders.

Gunth and his troops fight to the death, shouting "Mog Grishog!" ("Hail, Grishog!") as they fight.

After the battle, the PCs have a moment of quiet to search the chamber. Allow them to think they have killed Grishog and his elite guards. Let them search the chamber before you spring the next surprise on them.

The PCs will see that the throne is a large chair carved out of the very stone of the chamber. Gnome, dwarf, orc, and human skulls adorn its back and arms. It is much too large to have fit Gunth comfortably. The bastard sword of intricate workmanship is sized for a human and is obviously well cared for. The shield, 5' tall and kite shaped, is also much too large for little Gunth.

The chest at the foot of the throne is trapped with poison gas and locked. If this trap is set off, PCs within 10' of the trap must save vs. poison or fall asleep for 1-10 rounds. The chest is another decoy, full of fish bones gnawed clean.

Suddenly, the still of the chamber is disturbed by a low rumbling and a terrible grinding noise. The sound comes from the entryway, where you see a great iron portcullis quickly dropping. It crashes to the floor, echo-

ing loudly. Then the echoes die, and silence steals over the giant chamber.

Moments pass. Then, faintly in the distance, you hear the sound of a lone drum beating. It is joined by another, and then another. Soon the very walls are vibrating to the sound of dozens of goblin drums.

The portcullis is especially large, with thick bars and heavy, spiked weights. The PCs cannot lift the gate because the goblins in room 31A have jammed it from above. The thick bars are especially hard to bend (–25% to PCs' bend bars/lift gates rolls).

Ask the PCs to tell you what they are doing. Let them attempt whatever they want—prepare spells, position themselves defensively, hide, etc. Each PC should have a chance to announce his actions before the next event occurs two rounds later.

Just as the sound becomes unbearable, all the drums stop at once. All about the dim reaches of the chamber, cracks begin to open in the stone walls. And from them, the red eyes of scores of goblins stare viciously at you. As the goblins enter the chamber and stand quietly around its perimeter, you guess that there are over 60 of the foul creatures surrounding you. Among them are half a dozen worgs. From the enemy's ranks, an especially weasel-like goblin walks forth and addresses you in clear Common.

"His most powerful self, Grishog, invites you to lay down your arms and enjoy the hospitality of the Skull Crusher tribe," he says. "Or do you enjoy sacrifices?"

If the PCs decide to lay down their weapons, their possessions are taken to room 33, and they are escorted to room 13 where they work as slaves, fishing and operating the river gate. After a week, the party members are taken, one per day, to participate in a friendly game of Crush the Skull in area 27. Allow any reasonable escape attempt to succeed.

If the PCs refuse to comply with the goblin's offer, read the following:

You let your decision speak for itself, and a wave of low muttering sweeps through the goblin ranks. As if on command, the goblins begin to beat their shields with their weapons, slowly at first, then gradually picking up speed, chanting "Grishog, Grishog!" as they advance step by step. The worgs join the chant, howling in time with the goblins. And from somewhere behind the goblin wave, a single powerful voice yells, "Aggrok vesh!" ("Slay the invaders!").

The 84 **goblins** (AC 7; hp 7 (×12), 6 (×12), 5 (×12), 4 (×12), 3 (×12), 2 (×12), 1 (×12); two short spears each) and six **worgs** (hp 27, 25 (×2), 23 (×2), 18) continue to advance in even ranks until the PCs attack, each hurling one spear at the PCs. Immediately following the spear hurling, the goblins charge, gaining +2 to hit with their spears, but having a –1 penalty to their armor class and a –2 penalty to initiative for the first round.

When battle is joined, a maximum of six goblins may engage a completely surrounded PC, or three may engage a PC with his back to a wall, pillar, or other adventurer.

After four rounds of combat, Grishog himself emerges from area 31A, entering from behind the throne.

Out of the shadows emerges a 6'-tall goblin astride a huge, horse-size worg. The firelight dances upon the goblin's armor, a combination of chain and plate mail. A great helm covers his head, and he wields a bastard sword, a twin of the one by the throne. About his neck he wears a crushed human skull on a bone chain. Fire gleams in the worg's evil eyes as it lets out a tremendous howl. A cheer rises from the goblin forces as the large one appears. The cheer is "Grishog!"

**Grishog:** AC 3; MV 9; HD 3+1; hp 24; #AT 1; THAC0 17; Dmg by weapon type +4 (due to strength); AL LE; *bastard sword +1*. Grishog is huge, larger than most goblin chiefs. He and his great **worg** (hp 34; see area 16 for statistics) remain at a distance to direct the battle. They do not become involved in the fighting unless the PCs move to engage them. Grishog knows that his king will not be pleased when news of this battle gets back to the capital, so his guiding philosophy is "glory or death."

The goblins—except Grishog and his worg—flee if more than 50% of their comrades are defeated. If the PCs succeed in killing Grishog, a general rout occurs with all surviving goblins fleeing into area 31A and out the secret corridor to area 34.

This battle should end with either the PCs captured or dead, or the goblins slaughtered or running. In the latter case, the adventurers have succeeded in delaying Mogoglub's plans, and the mine can be reopened in safety. Any goblins remaining within the complex flee at the first opportunity in the ensuing days.

**32. Weapons and Armor.**

Piled high in this room are stockpiles of weapons that the goblins intend to use in their upcoming raids. All of the weapons shine as if newly made. Located here are: 50 spears, 32 short swords, 30 bows, 600 arrows, 60 slings, 45 helmets, 130 shields, and 40 suits of studded leather armor.

Tacked to one wall, painted on an animal hide, is a crude map of the surrounding countryside. A red circle has been drawn around Tallow's Post.

**33. Treasure Room.**

> The door opens to reveal a small room filled with sacks of treasure, all of which bear the mark of a merchant caravan. There are seven large canvas sacks, five sealed crates, a large wooden chest, and a small ivory case.

The sacks contain: 1,452 gp, 253 pp, and 5,338 cp. The sealed crates each contain 800 lbs. of silver ore extracted from the mines. When smelted, the ore in each crate yields the equivalent of 4,000 sp. The large wooden chest is filled with hay. If the PCs investigate further, they find a *long sword +1, +3 vs. reptiles*, cushioned in the straw. The inside of the ivory case is velvet lined and has six indentations for vials, four of which are now occupied. These vials contain two potions of *healing*, one potion of *invisibility*, and one potion of *treasure finding*. Also in the case is a *ring of wizardry* (doubles second-level spells).

**34. The Long, Dark Passage.**

> The secret door opens to reveal a wide passageway sloping sharply downward. A cool breeze greets you, but the smell of decay pervades the air. Caught under a rock, slapping back and forth in the steady breeze, is a large sheet of parchment. Hand-lettered in the crude goblin tongue is a message addressed to Grishog.

To those who can read goblin writing, the message says:
"Prepare, my loyal lieutenant. The fall of the axe blade is upon us. But it is a human skull that shall receive the crushing blow, and it will be my powerful hand that delivers it! Rouse your warriors. In Maglubiyet's dark name, the Skull Crushers march on Grinek's Feast!"

It is signed, "Mogoglub."

This passage leads into the undercities far below the mountains, and eventually to the goblin metropolis where the Great King sits upon his throne, planning war.

At your discretion, you may elect to have the goblins cave in this passageway to keep the PCs from gaining access to the goblin city. Or, you may allow the PCs to travel on and try to stop the goblin army before it marches. What strange and exciting (and fatal) adventures await in the Underdark of King Mogoglub?

## Concluding the Adventure

Clearing the goblins out of Tallow's Deep is, of course, only a temporary solution to the larger problem of the coming goblin invasion. If the PCs manage to defeat the goblins but simply leave the complex thereafter, the citizens of Tallow's Post will be overjoyed. A week later, however, goblins from other underground complexes arrive to set about reoccupying their tunnels. They flood area 11 and reset all the traps and ambush points. They also collapse or fill in the tunnels at areas 5, 6, and 16 to slow further human invasions. Within two months more, further changes will have been made in the complex, with new traps and passages (and monsters) added. However, there will be no further raids on humans, either in the town or in the mine, for some time to come.

The DM may develop this situation as appropriate to the campaign. It is assumed that within one year of this adventure, a goblin invasion of human settlements in the area will take place—unless the PCs find some way to slow or stop it. The destruction of the Tallow's Deep enclave will slow the invasion by six months; additional attacks against underground goblin forts will further delay these plans (or even end them, if the goblins are forced to flee the area). But it will be a long, long campaign indeed before this comes about! Ω

# I'M THE NO-SASE OGRE.

It's quite possible that your manuscripts and I have already met. If the editors receive a gaming article, but the author has not sent a self-addressed, stamped envelope with the manuscript to allow for a reply, the editors give the manuscript to me, and . . . well, let's not dwell on that.

Give the editors (and your manuscripts) a fair break. With each article you send us, enclose a SASE large enough to permit the easy return of the manuscript, should it require rewriting or be unsuitable for use. Canadians and residents of other countries should enclose international postal coupons, available at local post offices.

Don't let your article come my way. Be sure to use a SASE with all your submissions.

# CROCODILE TEARS

BY MARCUS L. ROWLAND

## One dark and stormy night, the town had a visitor.

Artwork by Karl Waller

*Marcus Rowland is a British SF and fantasy fan who first encountered the original D&D® game in 1975. He has written for many game systems, including adventures for Chaosium's CALL OF CTHULHU® game and Games Workshop's JUDGE DREDD and GOLDEN HEROES games. His favorite themes include time travel, cross-genre scenarios, and variant rules systems. Marcus would like to thank Gary Stratmann for numerous corrections and suggestions, and for composing the haiku.*

"Crocodile Tears" is an AD&D® Oriental adventure for a party of 5-8 characters of levels 4-6 (about 30 total PC levels). Ideally, most adventurers should be heavily armed bushi, samurai, or kensai. The adventure can easily be placed in any coastal locale in Kara-Tur or another *Oriental Adventures* campaign. Some directions and names may need to be changed to reflect the campaign's local geography. Conversion to other Oriental fantasy systems should be fairly easy.

Before running this scenario, you may need to do some preparatory work to put the PCs into a position in which they are able to spend several days following up a rumor. Some suggestions:

— The adventurers are mercenaries. After an unpleasant disagreement with their last employer, a bandit chief (now deceased), they intend to look for work in another province.

— The PCs are in the service of a local lord, who has sent them out to look for evidence of rebellion in the province. Their orders specifically tell them to investigate anything unusual. The PCs are disguised as ronin to avoid warning any rebels of the lord's interest.

— As per the previous suggestion, but the party is in the service of the lord of a neighboring province who wants to know if there will be a rebellion here. If so, he intends to invade.

Distances in this module are measured in *ri* (a Japanese measurement equalling 2½ miles). Other new terms are defined as they occur in the adventure.

### For the Player Characters

It's spring, and fate has brought you to Takura, a small village on a trade route, as night is falling. Having no reason to press on in darkness, you decide to seek lodgings at the Fortunate Traveler, a small but spotlessly tidy village inn.

Peasants scuttle out as you enter, desperate to avoid causing offense to warriors who have the power of life and death over them, and the innkeeper bustles around tidying the straw mats and fetching your orders. Only one customer remains, a traveling priest who bows politely and sips a cup of steaming tea.

A few minutes later, just as the innkeeper is about to bar the door, a limping, elderly ronin arrives. He exchanges wary nods and greetings, then looks again at the priest in great surprise and begins to laugh. Making his way slowly to the holy man's table, he drops wearily into a chair.

While discussing the events of the day and drinking a few cups of sake, you overhear snatches of the conversation on the other side of the inn. Suddenly, you hear an exchange that is extremely interesting:

"It was the year before last that it happened, and the village was never rebuilt. They say that a strange tai-fun or earthquake destroyed the place, but there were no survivors seen later, and that's very unusual. While I was there, the ruins seemed to shift in the night. I, for one, feel that my honor was not endangered by leaving."

"Aye, cousin, so it is told by all travelers. Perhaps one day someone will find the answer to this riddle."

"I'd bet that there are few who would dare."

"Your love of gambling is becoming notorious. Forget your foolish wagers, for such conduct may imperil your next incarnation!"

Their conversation quietens again, but what you have heard may have already aroused your interest.

## For the Dungeon Master

The ronin and the priest are actually yakuza, professional gamblers who prey on the customers of inns along the trade route. They have stopped in this village for the night and, seeing some relatively prosperous travelers (the PCs), they have decided to play a deadly joke.

The village they are discussing is Tijiki, a fishing community on the coast to the north. Two years ago, a prolonged summer storm drove a huge *wani* (a form of gargantuan crocodile) ashore in Tijiki Bay. Almost all the villagers were out in the storm, trying to save their temple from flooding, when the wani came upon them by surprise and killed most of them. Given this unexpectedly rich food supply, it decided to settle down for a prolonged feast. The storm made the surrounding hills impassable, and the few villagers who managed to escape from the wani were killed by rock and mud slides or wild animals.

The wani returned to the area with its mate later that year, and they laid a dozen eggs in the wreckage. This species tends its eggs, periodically turning them over or moving them to more suitable locations. The eggs have an incubation period of 20 months, and one or the other wani has laired in Tijiki throughout this period, tending the eggs while its mate seeks food at sea. The movements of the wani through the wreckage have caused the disturbances which travelers have noted. These reports, plus the disappearances of several fishing boats and peasants in the area, have led to a general desire to stay well away from Tijiki.

The yakuza don't know what's wrong in Tijiki (in fact, neither has ever been there) but know that many travelers fail to return. They hope to trick the adventurers into going there on a bet, leaving their stake money with the "priest." Naturally the yakuza will move on to another village as soon as the party has left. As it happens, they have picked the ideal moment for this trick; the eggs will hatch in a few days. The young wani spend several weeks hunting on land before returning to the sea, and are small and agile enough to chase a man into any hiding place—and powerful enough to kill him.

### You Bet Your Life?

Takura is a small and totally undistinguished village with 145 inhabitants, no schools or teahouses, and only one shrine, a small pagoda. The inn is small but clean, and the sake served is reasonably good. There is one guest room.

The "ronin" claims to be Toyama Mitsuru, from a nearby town (but not one the party has visited). The PCs have never heard of him, but that isn't particularly surprising. He wants to trick the party into saying that they'll visit Tijiki and investigate, then bet that they won't. He will accept bets of up to 10 ch'ien (at two-to-one odds) for proof that the adventurers have visited Tijiki. He wants the sign of the village inn or tea house as evidence.

To make the bet more interesting, he offers to pay out at four-to-one if the adventurers can solve the mystery and bring back proof of a solution. If necessary, Toyama will raise the odds to tempt the party. He looks prosperous enough to be able to put up the stakes offered and says that he'll be back in Takura in about 10 days but has other business to take care of in the meantime. The yakuza suggests leaving the money with a suitably neutral stakeholder, "The priest, for example," he says.

The priest says he is Nambo, from the temple at Negano, who is taking some books to the temple in Takayama. He'll be coming back through Takura in about 12 days. He pretends to disapprove of gambling but will grudgingly agree to hold the stakes if the participants promise that the winner will make a donation to his temple.

If the PCs suggest a different stake holder, the ronin willingly agrees, then robs the selected person later. Since he's making a bet rather than offering any normal sort of employment, there is no question of his putting up advance money for equipment or supplies.

If the PCs ask for more information about Tijiki, Mitsuro and Nambo suggest various possibilities, such as the presence of a hidden bandit gang or a ghost. Neither actually knows anything about the full extent of the danger (nor does anyone else). The priest says he knows nothing about the village, apart from travelers' tales.

Toyama Mitsuru is a cunning pickpocket and burglar as well as a proficient swordsman and gambler. He has yakuza clan tattoos on his back, chest, buttocks, and upper arms, and goes to great pains to conceal these parts of his body.

**Toyama Mitsuru:** AC 4; MV 9; Yak 5; hp 27; #AT 1; THAC0 18; Dmg by weapon type; S 12, D 17, C 12, I 16, W 10, Ch 16; AL LE; studded leather armor katana, wakizashi, dagger (concealed), two vials nonmagical sleeping drug, 5 ch'ien (real bank notes), 40 ch'ien (forged bank notes, used as flash money), 150 copper fen, three packs of playing cards (two are marked), eight dice.

The bank notes are good forgeries and will fool the PCs unless they say that they are examining them and spend at least one round doing so. Any city banker or merchant will spot the forged bank notes instantly and arrange to have the person presenting them arrested. No villagers encountered in this adventure will spot the forgeries.

Nambo is a yakuza but looks like a typical elderly priest. He will do his best to stay out of combat. He is a proficient actor, and his luggage consists of a bamboo frame pack holding a lacquer box, supposedly full of books but actually containing disguise materials. The bamboo frame conceals a spear blade that fits into a socket on the end of his staff. He has lost the top joint of the little finger of his left hand (a common mark of a yakuza who has failed his master at some time in his career) and tries to keep his injury concealed.

**Nambo:** AC 7; MV 12; Yak 6; hp 29; #AT 1; THAC0 18; Dmg by weapon type; S 14, D 17, C 12, I 17, W 12, Ch 17; AL LE; 200 copper fen (concealed), 8 ch'ien (real, concealed), begging bowl.

If the party decides to look for another stakeholder, possible candidates are the innkeeper, the village headman, and the priest of the local temple.

The inn is run by Bakamono Miyake, a *heimin* who looks (and is) about as trustworthy as a badly fed rat. The total value of the inn is probably much less than the stake money. The yakuza will veto him even if the PCs don't. (Note: Heimin are peasants, but the class also includes farmers, merchants, doctors, etc.).

The headman is Nojohito Imai, also a heimin, who lives in a small house near the inn. If asked to hold the stakes, he looks extremely worried and declines, saying that bandits might raid the village if they knew that there was money here. He won't change his mind.

The temple is a simple but perfectly maintained pagoda in a beautifully landscaped garden, holding a small stone religious statue of minor antiquarian significance. PCs who donate a little money, food, or work to the temple (for example, spending some time weeding the garden) will feel refreshed and peaceful, and gain normal spiritual rewards. Prayer has all normal effects.

The priest is Gekkai Takarada, an elderly monk who is somewhat deaf and extremely nearsighted. When first encountered, he's using a small pair of clippers to remove unsightly strands from one of the bushes.

**Gekkai Takarada:** AC 10; MV 3; Shu 3; hp 5; #AT 1 (but has sworn a vow of nonviolence); THAC0 20; S 7, D 7, C 16, I 12, W 8 (senile), Ch 10; AL LG; spells: *beneficence, bless, cure light wounds.*

Before agreeing to hold the stakes, Takarada insists that the winner must donate a tithe to the temple. He promises not to pay out any money unless both parties come to him and agree that the wager has been won, or agree to cancel it.

If Takarada is left holding the stakes, the yakuza return to the temple the following day. Nambo disguises himself as the PC who actually handed over the money, and the two yakuza say that they have decided to call off the bet. Takarada loses much honor from this trick and will leave the temple to take up the life of a wandering holy man when he learns the truth. If disguise is impossible (for example, if the person handing over the money was a korobokuru), the yakuza simply overpower Takarada and rob him. After retrieving the money, the yakuza leave the village and do their best to cover their tracks.

If the adventurers don't seem to be interested in visiting Tijiki or don't want to bet, the ronin won't press the matter. They express regret that the mystery of Tijiki will never be solved, then leave to try their con trick on the next group of suckers they encounter.

If the PCs want to bet but aren't prepared to put up stake money first, the yakuza won't accept the wager. After all, they'd lose if the party visited Tijiki safely, but wouldn't gain anything if the PCs were killed or changed their minds. Try to phrase this so that the ronin doesn't seem to be doubting the honor of any ronin or samurai in the party. The yakuza aren't suicidal!

It's possible that the PCs may accept the bet and leave the stake money with a neutral party, then rob the stake holder themselves. If so, the yakuza become extremely annoyed at this violation of their monopoly on crime, and some retaliation is likely. Messages eventually reach other members of the gang, and a

### Rumor Tables

| 1d20 | What Happened to Tijiki |
|---|---|
| 1-6 | Troops razed Tijiki after a tax collector was murdered (a popular theory, as no one likes tax collectors). |
| 7-8 | The village was destroyed by an earthquake. |
| 9-11 | The village was flattened by a tai-fun (there was a storm just before the village ceased to exist). |
| 12-15 | A tsunami drowned the village (or high waves from the storm mentioned previously). |
| 16-18 | A pirate horde raided the village, enslaved all the inhabitants, and razed the site. |
| 19-20 | Who knows? |

| 1d20 | Treasure in Tijiki |
|---|---|
| 1-4 | The headman of Tijiki was a miser with a hoard of silver. |
| 5-7 | The village temple held a silver statue. |
| 8-11 | Tijiki was even poorer than Takura. |
| 12-14 | The shrine held a sacred sword. |
| 15-17 | The shrine held a *cursed* sword. |
| 18-20 | A tax collector was in Tijiki when the village was destroyed, and the tax money may still be there. |

| 1d20 | Dangers of Tijiki |
|---|---|
| 1-4 | The ruins are haunted by those who were killed when the village was destroyed. |
| 5-7 | Some bears have moved down from the hills into the ruins. |
| 8-11 | The ruins are crawling with (roll 1d6): 1-2, vipers; 3-4, kumo (giant spiders); 5-6, bakemono. |
| 12-14 | Fishermen have seen *tako* off the coast (see the sidebar on page 41). |
| 15-17 | The temple was guarded by a pair of *shishi*, and they attack anyone who approaches the ruins. (Shishi are noble beasts resembling lions, usually found in pairs or small groups; they are associated with extremely holy men and are similar to the foo creatures described on pages 65-66 of *Monster Manual II.*) |
| 18 | A *hannya* has moved into the ruins and enchants anyone who enters the village. (A hannya is a witch who has made a pact with demons and has a snake's body instead of legs.) |
| 19-20 | Who knows? |

criminal manhunt slowly forms against the party. Try to run this so that the PCs end up fleeing toward Tijiki.

Adventurers can't accomplish much of significance in Takura. They won't be able to recruit bearers, except at sword point, since Tijiki is held in fear by all the locals. It isn't easy to persuade the peasants to talk, since they tend to hide from warriors and grovel a lot, but if pressed they'll reveal vague and contradictory rumors about the village. No current resident of Takura has visited Tijiki since the disaster, or wants to do so. Roll 1d20 on each of the three rumor tables on page 34 for each person questioned.

Roll on all three rumor tables, then try to prepare a coherent story. For example, if the rolls are 16, 11, and 16, the informant might tell the following tale:

"Pirates attacked Tijiki in the dead of night, killing the headman and other notables when they found that there was nothing to steal. The shishi reached the temple too late and couldn't save the priest from a similar fate. However, their fierce bravery drove the pirates back into the sea, though they had already enslaved the villagers. The pirates razed the town as they retreated. Now the shishi guard the ruins of the temple. Having failed once, they will never let anyone approach the village again."

If more than one person is being interviewed, roll separately for each person. If details are not contradictory, they should be woven into the story; otherwise, they should lead to polite arguments. The PCs, of course, may find themselves asking: If there were no survivors from Tijiki, how does everyone know so much about its fate? No one does, of course. Rumors work like that.

In addition to these rumors, the following information is common knowledge:

—Everyone who has visited the ruins has reported a strong sensation of being watched.

—Several visitors noted that sections of debris seemed to move and shift during the night, as though some giant had rearranged them.

—Two members of a large exploring party disappeared in Tijiki. Lone travelers have also disappeared in the area.

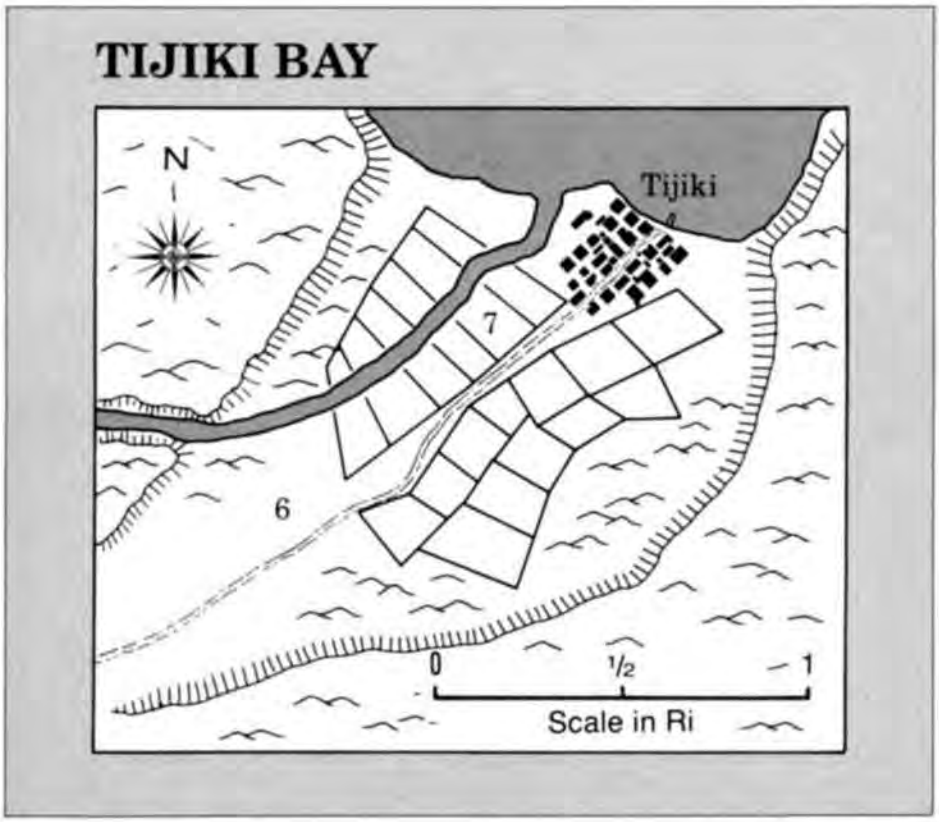
—Three fishing boats have been lost near Tijiki. Given the above information, plus the possibility of a bet with the "ronin," it is probable that the adventurers will decide to go to the ruins of Tijiki.

### The Road to Tijiki

The most direct route to Tijiki is a faint trail through fairly rough country, passing through the hills north of Takura (see Takura to Tijiki map). Other routes bypass the hills but effectively double the distance and involve river crossings or boat trips. They would make it difficult to reach Tijiki and return in time to win the bet. Another problem of indirect routes, which should not be revealed to players, is that they will bring the adventurers to Tijiki a day or more after the wani eggs hatch.

**1. Into the Hills.** The first five ri (12½ miles) of the journey are uneventful, following a rough trail toward the hills. At this point, the trail starts to climb into the hills, although it avoids the worst slopes. The trail is usable by horses.

**2. Side Trail.** A side path leads down into a rocky gorge, while the main road continues. If the PCs have asked for directions to Tijiki while in Takura, they'll know that the main road leads to a bridge crossing the gorge, and ultimately to Tijiki.




**3. Good Advice.** If the PCs follow the main road, they encounter an old peasant woman crossing the path and climbing up toward a cottage. She bows and hails the party.

"Noble warriors! May this miserable peasant approach you?" Normally, sane peasants do their best to avoid ronin and samurai, who have the right to kill any heimin who offends them. If the party takes any action against her, she fades into mist and vanishes with a sound of shrill cackling laughter. If the PCs allow her to approach, she says:

"Mighty lords! I must tell you that the road ahead leads only to a precipice. The bridge across the gorge collapsed in a landslide when the snows melted. There is another path, a ford. Go back half a ri and take the side road down into the gorge, but beware, for the slope is very steep!"

If the adventurers fling her a coin, or reward her in any way, she adds:

"Before using the ford, it is advisable to bribe the kappa that guards it. You will find some cucumbers growing in the ground near my cottage."

With these words she claps her hands and vanishes, and the cottage crumbles into an outcropping of rock. Anyone digging beside it will soon find a few cucumbers on a vine.

The woman is actually a kuei, the spirit of a woman who was wounded by a samurai while she tried to deliver her message. The samurai later died because he didn't listen to the warning. The old woman died shortly thereafter, knowing of the samurai's death but still irritated that he wouldn't listen to her words. The kuei can't get revenge on the samurai, so it takes petty pleasure in annoying anyone who is too proud to listen to an old woman. Kuei are normally able to make possession attacks, but this one will not do so unless severely provoked, because there is no way that it can be avenged on the one who killed it.

**Kuei:** AC –4; MV 18; HD 3; hp 18; #AT 1; THAC0 17; Dmg 1-6; SA possession (rarely used); SD +1 or better weapon to hit; immune to *ESP, charm,* enchantment, illusion, water spells, psionics, normal fire and cold; half damage from magical fire and cold; become ethereal at will; AL CG; OA/124; no treasure. The kuei can be destroyed by *exorcism* and other spells that drive out spirits.

**4. Former Bridge.** The spirit's story is true. If the PCs check the bridge, they find that the landslip has ripped away everything but the support posts, leaving a 70-yard-wide crevasse with sheer cliffs descending 300′ to the bottom of the gorge. The wreckage of the old rope bridge is just visible at the bottom.

**5. River Ford.** The path to the ford is extremely steep, and anyone riding a horse must make 1-3 dexterity checks on 1d20 to avoid an accident. If any roll is failed, roll 1d20, adding 2 if the dexterity roll was a 20. (Pack horses can be led down the slope without incident.)

| | |
|---|---|
| 1-10 | Horse slightly lamed (unrideable for 1-6 hours) |
| 11-16 | Horse seriously lamed (unrideable for 1-3 days) |
| 17-18 | Horse's leg broken (needs healing or euthanasia) |
| 19+ | Horse falls and rolls on rider; rider takes 2-12 hp damage if a dexterity roll is failed. |

At the bottom of the gorge, a narrow path leads on toward a mountain river that swirls with the ominous gray colors and whirlpools suggestive of a fast, dangerous stream. At one point the stream widens a little, and this seems to be the only usable ford.

A kappa appears in the water as the party approaches. It's accustomed to travelers arriving carrying cucumbers, and it will be extremely annoyed if the PCs don't have any. The kappa demands that one of the PC wrestle it to get permission to cross. If the kappa wins, the victim drowns and it challenges the party again. If the PCs have cucumbers and are suitably polite, the kappa allows them to pass. Hopefully, the party will remember to keep some cucumbers for the return journey.

**Kappa:** AC 3/–2; MV 6//18; HD 4; hp 27; #AT 2; THAC0 17; Dmg 5-10/5-10; SD regeneration; AL CE; 18/00 strength; master of jujutsu (throw 1,2; movement 1; vital area 1,2); OA/124.

If the kappa is killed, the water of the stream clears to reveal a rusty katana, four silver tael, and the bones of many previous victims. The sword blade is too badly damaged to be usable, but the sword's "furniture" (the brass guard and hilt) are of high quality and still in fairly good shape. They can be traded in to take about 20% off the price of a new katana.

Beyond the stream, the path continues on toward Tijiki, eventually climbing back up to the main path. This climb is also steep, and riders must roll to keep their horses from accidents as before.

The main route is heavily overgrown here, since it has rarely been used since Tijiki was destroyed. Eventually, the trail passes through a range of steep hills, and the party must pick its way across the remains of several huge rock slides. Occasional bones protrude from the rubble. It starts to rain gently as the adventurers take the last turning and descend the steep path into the bay that holds the village of Tijiki.

**The Dead Village**

From the hills, Tijiki looks almost normal. The distance is too great to reveal the full extent of the damage, and the mud that has been washed into town over the last two winters looks like wet paths between the houses.

The trail runs north down the hill into the village, parallel to a mountain stream that originates at a spring in the hills (see Tijiki Bay map). Rice paddies flank the last half ri of trail and stream. The lack of any evidence of human life, and the untended look of the fields, are the main signs that the village is uninhabited.

**6. Abandoned Shrine.** A few hundred yards beyond the hilltop is a small, roughly built wooden shrine covered in withered wreaths of flowers. It contains a human skeleton dressed in fragments of rotting cloth that might have once been good material. The skeleton's left leg is broken, and a shining katana rests on its lap of bones. One hand holds a bamboo scroll tube.

The skeleton was formerly Tadashi Nisui, a ronin who was living in the village when the wani attacked. As he fled for his life, he saw his wife and child crushed by a falling wall. A few minutes later, his leg was broken by a slap of the wani's tail, and as he lay in the road, a giant reptilian foot came down upon him. Realizing that he would never be able to slay the monsters or regain his honor, Tadashi crawled to the hills, where he prayed for retribution but soon died of his injuries. The scroll tube contains his death message in what appears to be broad slashes of brown ink (actually his dried blood, penned with a fingertip) on a piece of unused parchment:

In death's long shadow,
Fled in dying honor's blood,
Kami vengeance seeks.

(A *kami* is a spirit, usually associated with a place.) If the PCs can gain no help from this haiku on their own, roll an intelligence check for the party leader. On a successful roll, that adventurer realizes that the writer lost his honor by fleeing death and hopes that his spirit will seek vengeance. If you want to give the PCs a broader clue, use the following message (not a haiku) instead:

I fled the coming of the beast;
My wife and child were slain.
Honor is dead, and I shall follow;
May my spirit avenge this destruction.

The shrine was built by travelers who visited Tijiki a few weeks after the destruction of the village. It has been maintained by other travelers.

Although Tadashi Nisui did not return as a spirit, the force of his prayer did have one result. His katana has retained some element of his spirit and now act as a +3 magical weapon. However, if it is taken farther away from the village, it begins to show signs of rust and corrosion; it brightens if it is returned. If all the wani (including the young) are destroyed or driven from Tijiki, the katana rusts more rapidly, disintegrating after three hours and leaving the corroded brass of its hilt (without magical powers) as its only remains.

**7. Baby in Distress.** After another few hundred yards, the adventurers hear a shrill piping noise, like a distressed bird, coming from one of the overgrown fields to the left of the road. If they investigate the disturbance, they hear a thrashing noise, like an animal struggling. Eventually, they will be able to see the source of the noise—an extremely small octopuslike creature with one of its tentacles caught in an old spring trap. It is uninjured but stuck fast.

The PCs recognise this legendary creature as a baby tako, an intelligent race that lives in the sea off most coasts (see the sidebar on page 41). It is unarmed and surrounded by some plums it has apparently dropped. The small being is clutching a leather model of an octopus, apparently the tako equivalent of a doll.

The DM should make every effort to ensure that the PCs are aware that this creature is a helpless, terrified baby. If the adventurers decide to free it, they will feel a sense of intense well-being. When freed, the baby tako retreats to a nearby stream and swims away.

If the PCs decide to kill or capture the tako, they are due for an unpleasant surprise. A few minutes before it was trapped, the baby tako met the Bosatsu Jizo, the divine spirit that takes a special interest in children (see below). Tako are intelligent enough to attract this demigod's attention, and the spirit manifested itself in tako form to give the baby its doll before being called away on more urgent business. As soon as the PCs move to strike at the tako, or when it becomes obvious that they will not release it, the Bosatsu Jizo is alerted and manifests itself in human form to protect the young one.

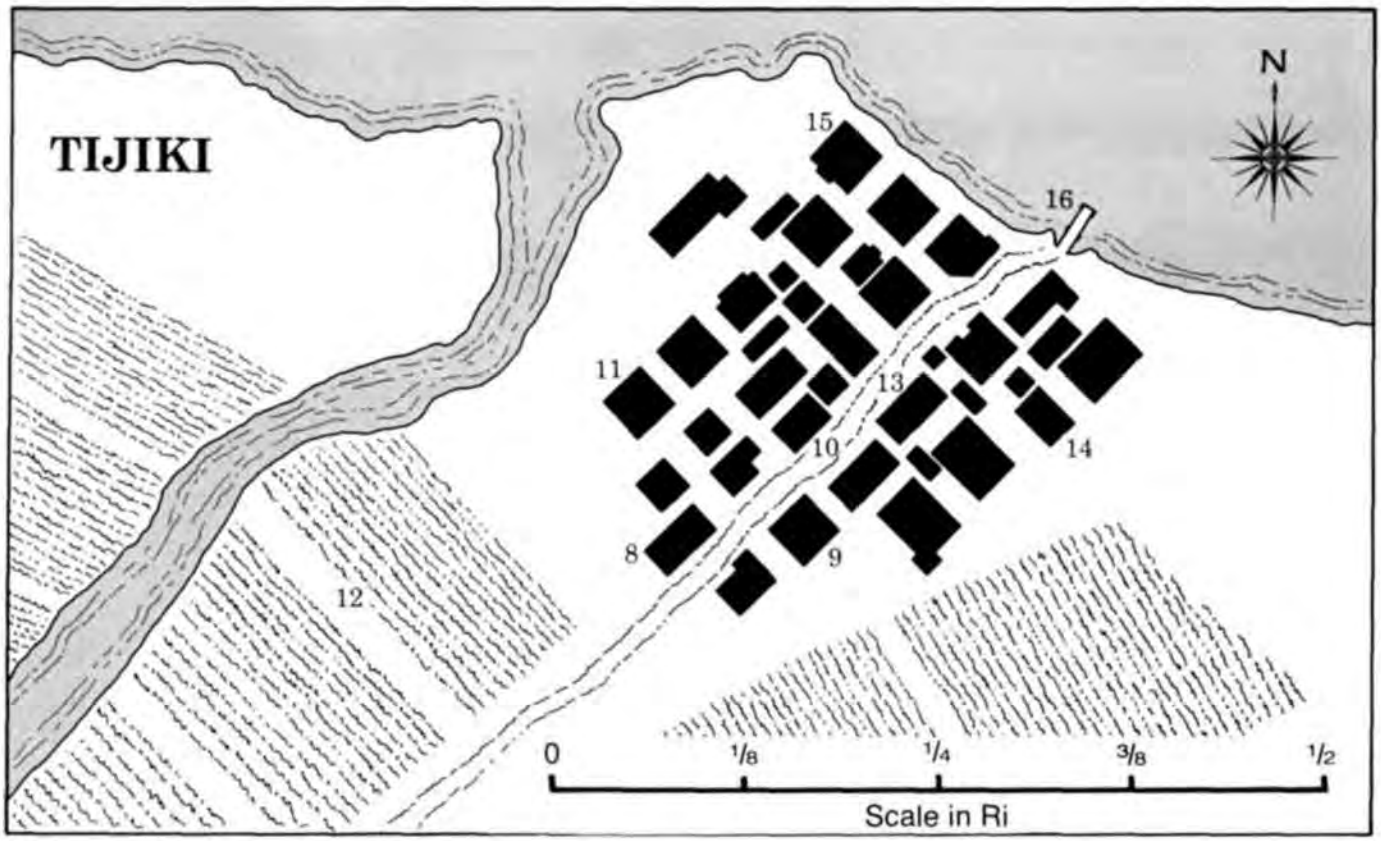
The Jizo appears as an ancient monk standing in the field. With no discernable motion, it causes the party's weapons to be ripped from their hands and thud into the ground with great force. As the monk walks toward the PCs, alert adventurers will realize that it leaves no footprints. After releasing the tako and curing its wounds, the Jizo carries it to the stream. Anyone who tries to attack

**Bosatsu Jizo**
Demigod

ARMOR CLASS: *–2*
MOVEMENT: *Infinite*
HIT POINTS: *150*
NO. OF ATTACKS: *2*
THAC0: *1*
DAMAGE: *By weapon type*
SPECIAL ATTACKS: *None*
SPECIAL DEFENSES: *+3 or better weapon to hit; saving throw of 2 against all attacks*
MAGIC RESISTANCE: *90%*
ALIGNMENT: *Lawful good*
PRIEST: *25th-level shukenja*
WARRIOR: *12th-level samurai*
WIZARD: *16th-level wu jen*
ROGUE: *10th-level bard*
MONK: *15th-level* Oriental Adventures *monk*
PSIONIC ABILITY: *III (250 points)*

| S | D | C | I | W | Ch |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 18/00 | 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 | 18 |

The Bosatsu Jizo is a demigod with a special interest in the welfare and education of children. It usually appears as an ancient monk but can assume the form of any intelligent creature. In human form, it carries a wooden bo staff (entirely nonmagical) and is a master of all defensive martial arts.




the monk is suitably punished by magic or a swift blow. Magical attacks that might harm the baby tako won't work; others appear to do no damage.

Once the tako is free, the demigod returns to the adventurers. It points out their errors, including any mean acts or crimes they have previously committed, and says that they must avenge the dead of Tijiki to atone for their sins. The Jizo will not reveal the details of the threat faced by the adventurers but mentions that they must deal with "beasts" rather than a supernatural manifestation. It then disappears, but the PCs will feel that they are being watched throughout the rest of the adventure.

Shortly after this incident (whatever its outcome), the light rain intensifies to a heavy shower, later becoming a severe thunderstorm that continues into the early evening. Light to severe rain continues throughout the adventurers' stay in the village.

As the PCs enter Tijiki, they should begin to realize the full extent of the destruction. The village paths are flooded with 2'-3' of mud, and most of the buildings are in ruins, smashed as though struck by gigantic fists or a severe earthquake. The village is oppressively quiet; no birds sing and no animals are visible. The first few houses are completely flattened, their light wood construction having failed to protect them. Unless otherwise stated, all other buildings are similarly damaged. Most have been searched by earlier explorers, and there is only a 5% chance that any given building holds something of value. Any discovery requires a minimum of one hour's search and is worth 3-30 copper fen.

**8. The Golden Carp Inn.** The village inn still stands, although one side wall has been destroyed. If the PCs still hope to win the bet, they will be disappointed to find that the inn's sign has disappeared, apparently removed by earlier souvenir hunters. Most of the inn is relatively free of mud (apparently cleared by earlier explorers), and it is probably the best place to set up camp. A search of at least one hour discloses a buried box holding 25 copper fen.

**9. Town Shrine.** This shrine has been demolished and is unrecognisable without extensive excavation. Digging eventually reveals the large, rose-colored granite boulder that formerly embodied the kami associated with the temple. Excavating it is a worthwhile deed for any follower of the temple's religion but won't help the party to deal with its immediate problems.

**10. Former Nest.** The house on this site has apparently been destroyed. The adventurers will probably be puzzled by the presence of a huge pit, at least 20' deep and wide, surrounded by ramparts of excavated earth. This was one of the sites the wani chose to incubate their eggs, which have now been moved to another location. Scattered house timbers are scored with enormous claw marks spanning 20". The rain has obliterated other clues, such as the track of the wani's tail.

**11. Current Nest.** In the grounds of a demolished house, the wani eggs are buried 20' below a pile of recently turned earth. There are 12 eggs, all fertile, that

will hatch two nights after the adventurers reach Tijiki (two nights before they arrive if they took one of the long routes to Tijiki).

By day, the **female wani** (hp 94) lies in the nearby paddy field at area 12, buried in the mud. If the nest is disturbed, she immediately surges up from her resting place, covered in mud and uprooted plants, and attacks the adventurers (see the sidebar on page 40).

If the female is encountered before the nest is found, she attempts to lure the adventurers deeper into the paddy to where she can fight in the water. If reduced to 20 hp or less, the wani retreats to the river and swims away, emerging on the seacoast and making her way back to the eggs if the adventurers don't seem to be present.

The eggs are leathery, melon-shaped objects approximately 8' long that quiver slightly, especially if touched. The eggs contain viable young that are near to hatching and can survive if the egg case is broken. Whether the wani hatch naturally or the eggs are damaged, the **young wani** (hp 23 each) have the characteristics listed in the sidebar.

If the PCs have previously encountered the Bosatsu Jizo, they may be afraid to touch or attack the hatchlings. Wani, however, are not intelligent creatures, and the Jizo is not interested in protecting their young.

If the adventurers do not disturb the nest or explore the rice paddy, they will not encounter the female wani or young at any time the next day.

**12. Rice Paddies.** These marshy fields were once an important source of food and income for the village of Tijiki. Now, the muddy water hides not only dead plants but the bones of villagers who were killed by the monsters as they fled their homes in terror. There is no treasure to be found here.

The rice paddy to the east of the river and closest to the village is the female wani's favorite mud hole. From here, she can keep an eye on her nest (area 11) and watch for intruders.

**13. Headman's House.** This house belonged to the village headman, who was very wealthy. However, he spent his money on fine porcelain, fabrics, and other artworks that have been either stolen by looters or destroyed by 20 months of rain and mud. For each man-hour spent searching these ruins, there is a cumulative 5% chance that an intact antique vase (worth 13 ch'ien) will be found. Nothing else of value has survived.

**14. Tea House.** This is another thoroughly smashed building, but its sign is still intact. Adventurers who are interested in winning the bet can remove the sign and return to Takura, hoping to claim their winnings. Of course, they are due for a disappointment.

**15. Temple.** This building has been partially submerged by high tides every month since the village was destroyed, and the grounds are covered in mud and slime. The pagoda has collapsed upon a large statue, a crude stone carving of great antiquity and religious significance. It weighs several tons and is half submerged in mud.

Nothing of value will be found here, apart from the spiritual value of contemplating the statue. However, the victims of the wani's first attack were not buried

according to the correct rite, and their bones protrude from the mud. Members of the temple's religion who perform the appropriate ritual for the dead are probably doing a lot to safeguard their next incarnations.

**16. Pier** The fishing pier has been smashed, but the remaining timbers are still loosely linked by ropes and chains, and float on the tide. This is probably the best source of large timbers for trap and weapon construction. However, 50% of the timbers are waterlogged and will break under any real load. This won't be obvious unless the adventurers test them (for example, by loading them with rocks).

Soon after sunset the next evening, the **male wani** (hp 137; see below) returns to Tijiki, coming ashore from the stream through the rice paddies at area 12. The two wani (or the male only, if the female has been killed) excavate the nest to reveal the eggs, which start to hatch around midnight.

Once the eggs are exposed, the male starts to look for food (horses, adventurers, etc.). The wani isn't a particularly subtle hunter, and its search is punctuated by the noise of snapping trees and timber, collapsing rubble, and occasional bass roars. Its essentially random search can be simulated by rolling 1d6 for direction at each building:

| 1d6 | Direction |
|---|---|
| 1-3 | Continue ahead |
| 4 | Turn left |
| 5 | Turn right |
| 6 | Turn around |

The wani demolishes all buildings in its path and looks for prey concealed by the wreckage. If the wani reaches the edge of the village, the DM should reroll any result that takes it outside. If the monster can actually see prey, it will pursue.

If the adventurers freed the baby tako (area 7) without the intervention of the Jizo, they will be rescued (once only, at a dramatically opportune moment) by a war group of six adult tako who have been hiding in the mud nearby (see the sidebar on page 41). Each carries four battle axes and two short spears.

These creatures won't defeat the wani and should do only token damage, but they will distract the monster long enough to allow the adventurers to escape. This rescue discharges their obligation to the party, and the tako then leave and play no further part in events. If the tako are attacked by the PCs, they retaliate. They cannot talk to humans and don't wish to do so.

If the wani finds anything (or anyone) edible, it attempts to carry its catch back to the nest to feed its young. One human victim will feed 4-6 young. After eating, the young wani sleep for 3d6+6 hours. Even if the adult wani eat (at least four humans or a horse per adult), they both remain awake to guard the young. Otherwise, one adult prowls the area while the other stays in the nest. On subsequent nights, all the wani (including the young) roam the village in search of food (mostly small animals).

Exact methods of dealing with the wani are left to the players' ingenuity. Possible solutions include some sort of pit and stake trap, poisoning, magic, or leading them to the cliffs east of the village and sending them to their deaths on the rocks below. The DM should make extermination of the wani very difficult. For example, normal human doses of poison must be multiplied enormously before they affect the adult wani.

**Wani (gargantuan crocodile)**

| | Male | Female | Young |
|---|---|---|---|
| FREQUENCY | Rare | Rare | Rare |
| NO. APPEARING | 1-2 | 1-2 | 2-12 |
| ARMOR CLASS | 2 | 2 | 4 |
| MOVEMENT RATE | 10//20 | 10//20 | 6//12 |
| HIT DICE | 25 | 20 | 5 |
| % IN LAIR | ——— | Nil | ——— |
| TREASURE TYPE | ——— | Nil | ——— |
| NO. OF ATTACKS | 3 | 3 | 2 |
| THAC0 | 5 | 5 | 15 |
| DAMAGE/ATTACK | 6-36/4-32/4-32 | 5-30/3-24/3-24 | 3-18/2-16 |
| SPECIAL ATTACKS | ——— | Exceptional damage | ——— |
| SPECIAL DEFENCES | ——— | Minor spell immunities | ——— |
| MAGIC RESISTANCE | ——— | Standard | ——— |
| INTELLIGENCE | ——— | Animal | ——— |
| ALIGNMENT | ——— | Neutral | ——— |
| SIZE | L (46'-55' long) | L (41'-50' long) | L (15'-20' long) |
| PSIONIC ABILITY | ——— | Nil | ——— |
| LEVEL/XP VALUE | X 10,600 + 35/hp | IX 8,600 + 30/hp | IV 205 + 5/hp |

Wani are gigantic crocodiles, huge relatives of those described on page 15 of the *Monster Manual*. There are legends that this species was created magically, and it is certain that these monsters are immune to spells which affect only normal animals (e.g., *speak with animals, possess animal*, etc.).

Wani get three attacks: a bite, a claw, and a tail bash, each of which may be directed at a separate opponent (young wani lack the claw attacks of their elders). The tail can lash sideways up to half the animal's body length (e.g., 25' for an average male, 22' for a female, 8' for young.

## Concluding the Adventure

If the adventurers have simply collected the teahouse sign as evidence of their visit, then left without destroying the wani, they will probably expect to collect their winnings. If the village priest is the stakeholder, he is surprised to see the party again and insists that they have already taken their money. The old priest is telling the truth—from his point of view. This leaves the party short of money and eager to find two yakuza. Their adventures on this quest could be extremely interesting.

If the adventurers have achieved complete success, they will need to devise a way to transport the evidence (such as a captured hatchling or the head of an adult wani) back to Takura. When they arrive, the PCs find that their money has been stolen, but there is a reward for their courage if they helped the baby tako. The sky suddenly darkens, and a

towering column of whirling clouds races across the countryside, depositing two extremely dizzy yakuza in front of the PCs. The adventurers' actions have interested the Bosatsu Jizo, who feels that they deserve the money. The yakuza renounce their evil ways, shave their heads, and join the priesthood. Since the money has not been lost, Takarada does not need to leave his comfortable temple. The Jizo does not materialise, but prayers for healing and other favors may be granted at this time. However, the PCs risk retribution for frivolous or unworthy requests, or any action against the yakuza after the latters' conversions.

One final detail remains. Successful adventurers will probably be in possession of some relic of their victory, such as a wani head, a caged (and extremely angry) hatchling, or a few giant claws and teeth. Unless any dead specimens are quickly treated to prevent rotting, they will smell indescribably awful in 1-6 days. It's probably a good idea to hire some *eta* to transport these specimens beyond Takura, or the adventurers risk serious loss of face (eta are those in the "untouchable" caste, especially those who handle dead animals and humans, tan leather, etc.).

If the PCs are working for a lord, they will probably want to give him these specimens. If they aren't under any special obligations, the PCs will probably think of selling such items, starting the heroes on a whole series of adventures as they look for suitable buyers. Some guidelines on possible prices:

Adult wani head: 50 tael if sold to Imperial Museum
Live wani young: 100 tael if sold to Imperial Menagerie
Pair of wani young, male and female: 250 tael if sold to Imperial Menagerie
Dead wani young: 25 tael if sold to Imperial Museum
Wani claw: 10 tael if sold to apothecary
Wani tooth: 5 tael if sold to apothecary

The wani are a previously unknown species, hence the particularly high price for a pair. These are the best prices that can be achieved after hours or days of negotiations. Remember that prolonged haggling over a sale is the mark of a low-caste merchant and should be scorned by any samurai or ronin. An alternate possibility is the use of such items as gifts or bribes to appropriate officials, such as the Keeper of the Imperial Menagarie. Ω

**Tako**

| | Male | Female | Young |
|---|---|---|---|
| FREQUENCY | Rare | Very rare | Very rare |
| NO. APPEARING | 3-12 | 1-2 | 1-6 |
| ARMOR CLASS | 3 | 2 | 7 |
| MOVEMENT RATE | 3//8 | 3//8 | 1//3 |
| HIT DICE | 4 | 6 | 1 |
| % IN LAIR | 30% | 95% | 50% |
| TREASURE TYPE | ——— | J,Q | ——— |
| NO. OF ATTACKS | ——— | 7 | ——— |
| THAC0 | 17 | 15 | 19 |
| DAMAGE/ATTACK | 1-2(×6)/3-6* | 1-3(×6)/2-8* | 0-1(×6)/1-3 |
| SPECIAL ATTACKS | Constriction, multiple attacks, surprise | Constriction, multiple attacks, surprise | Surprise, multiple attacks |
| SPECIAL DEFENCES | ——— | Special | ——— |
| MAGIC RESISTANCE | ——— | Standard | ——— |
| INTELLIGENCE | ——— | Average | ——— |
| ALIGNMENT | ——— | Lawful neutral | ——— |
| SIZE | M | L | S |
| PSIONIC ABILITY | ——— | Nil | ——— |
| LEVEL/XP VALUE | IV<br>135 + 4/hp | V<br>375 + 6/hp | II<br>18 + 1/hp |

* Or by weapon type (see below).

Tako are intelligent octopi with the ability to move onto land and use weapons and other tools. They have their own language based on tentacle movements and skin-color changes. Tako have a tribal society based in coastal underwater caves, and they raid the land for food, weapons, and other human artifacts. In some areas they coexist with humans, cooperating to attack sea monsters and help fishermen, but this is unusual. They have a well-developed sense of honor and will avenge attacks and repay debts. Tako war parties are typically made up exclusively of males, each carrying 1-6 spears and 1-6 hand axes to a maximum of seven weapons.

Tako can make constriction attacks as octopi (see *Monster Manual*, page 75). Adult males have 4 hp per tentacle, females 6 hp per tentacle. They can't secrete ink except in small quantities (such ink is greatly prized for use in calligraphy). Tako are extremely good at camouflage, and each can change its color and pattern to match any natural terrain in a single round, allowing it a 50% chance to surprise.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# CHADRANTHER'S BANE

BY PAUL HANCOCK

## A change in perspective makes all the difference.

Artwork by Paul Jaquays

*Canadian Paul Hancock is a 21-year-old history major at the University of Ottawa. His interests include writing, parachuting, sailing, and especially traveling. Paul tells us he began writing "Chadranther's Bane" on a train in northern India three years ago.*

"Chadranther's Bane" is an AD&D® adventure for a party of 5-8 characters of levels 4-6 (about 30 total levels). It emphasizes the value of negotiation, cooperation, stealth, and especially problem solving. While combat is often involved in this adventure, players who enjoy nothing but dice-rolling duels to the death may end up dissatisfied—or just plain dead!

To ensure the greatest chance of success, the party should have a good mix of classes. Representatives of the wizard, warrior, priest, and rogue groups (especially thieves) should be present. If the party is relatively weak or inexperienced, 1-3 NPC henchmen of reasonable power may accompany the group.

The DM must become thoroughly familiar with the adventure before play, especially the rules governing the *sphere of diminution.* For their part, the players must be prepared to adapt to a strange "new" world.

All page references to the *Dungeon Masters Guide* are to the 1st Edition book.

A chart listing the statistics for all the normal-size creatures and diminutive beings encountered in this adventure is located at the end of the module. Individual statistics that vary from this chart are listed in the text.

Note that some spells and magical items given in this adventure are not found in the AD&D 2nd Edition rules. These spells and items (from the 1st Edition *DMG, Players Handbook,* or *Unearthed Arcana)* may be used or replaced as the DM wishes.

### Adventure Background

More than a century ago, the kingdom of Kestria flourished. Originally a quiet agricultural nation, the wise administration of a succession of kings gradually changed it into a commercial and cultural center. For the first time in history, Kestria built roads across the inhospitable wilderness regions to the south, establishing firm trade links with the lands beyond. Caravans of trade goods

traveled down these roads, returning months or years later with fortunes in precious metals, exotic fabrics, spices, and items of arcane nature. It was a period of great prosperity for the Kestrian people, and especially (through the virtues of extensive taxation) for the nobility. The wealth of the kings of Kestria became legendary.

It was only a matter of time, of course, before more warlike nations focused avaricious eyes on the rich kingdom. Kestria was a nation of merchants, not of warriors. Its grip on its outer provinces began to weaken as hostile neighbors repeatedly overran its borders. These pressures from without, combined with corruption and petty rivalries from within, proved to be too much. Whole provinces rose in rebellion. In those dark months, as the kingdom's doom became increasingly apparent, some men chose to die fighting for their respective causes—and some took advantage of Kestria's death throes to make a huge profit.

Chadranther was one of the latter. A half-elf of obscure origin and motivation, he had somehow managed to become a trusted apprentice of the great Valedyr the White, master of magic for his majesty the king. When Valedyr left to fight for his lord in a decisive battle with the rebel forces, Chadranther saw his chance. His name means "silent cat" in Elvish, and late one night, on the eve of the great battle, he lived up to that appellation. After evading all traps and guards with magic and stealth, he crept unnoticed into his master's "impenetrable" treasure vaults, where he stole a large number of priceless jewels and magical items. Then he disappeared and was never seen or heard from again.

Doubtless Chadranther would have been caught had his master been available to deal with him, but Valedyr was otherwise occupied many leagues away, dueling with enemy spell-casters. The next day, the king's forces were utterly defeated in battle, an invisible stalker killed old Valedyr as he fled for his life, and in the subsequent years of anarchy, few men had time to wonder what happened to Chadranther or the priceless treasure he took with him.

But now, a century after the fall of the Kingdom of Kestria and the establishment of the feuding Kestrian States, sages and professional treasure hunters have become very interested in Chadranther's strange disappearance. The legend of "Valedyr's Lost Treasure" is well known among adventurers. Some say that the treasure is a fortune in gold and jewels; others say that it is largely magical in nature. Whichever version is believed, everyone agrees that the treasure is probably still somewhere in the wild territories to the south, where *commune* and *contact other plane* spells indicate Chadranther fled with it a hundred years ago. Many have gone to look for the treasure, and at least half of these have never returned.

Further use of information spells indicates that one of the magical items Chadranther stole was an object of great power, and that this object was the cause of his disappearance. For this reason, sages have dubbed this mysterious object "Chadranther's Bane." Indeed, many sages have copies of a famed passage from Valedyr's private papers that speaks of this object. In his day, Valedyr was a famous plane traveler. After a particularly long absence, he returned with a magical item "of such diabolical power that I could handle it only from afar, using magical powers of telekinesis . . . and, having deposited the sphere in the deepest corner of my vaults, where it is sufficiently removed from other objects to cause them no damage, I resolved to experiment on it until I could understand its working. . . . After much fruitless research, in which I have placed myself in great bodily danger, I have become convinced that no ordinary mortal can control the sphere. There is only one way to stop the sphere from functioning, and that is to destroy it. For now, however, I will leave it intact; perhaps it has its uses." There is no doubt that Chadranther was trapped or killed by this mysterious magical device after his escape.

All of the above is common knowledge, at least among sages, historians, bards, and adventurers. Nothing more is known.

## For the Dungeon Master

Chadranther's escape from Valedyr's treasure vault was not as mysterious as it may seem. He used a *teleport* spell that he read from a scroll he had kept hidden for years for just that purpose. Even though he had planned the burglary in great detail, Chadranther almost did not make it alive, suffering numerous wounds from traps and magical wards. When he reached the vaults, he ran from chamber to chamber, racing the poison gas that hissed out of hidden outlets, picking up anything that looked valuable and shoving it into a sack. He was in a great hurry as he read the *teleport* spell, and he stumbled over the final words. He materialized at his destination—but almost 30' in the air. He fell screaming, the sack came loose from his belt, and his loot was scattered in all directions. Stunned and disoriented, Chadranther picked himself up, staggered a few steps, and collapsed, unconscious.

Chadranther had *teleported* to a wayhouse, one of many buildings erected to shelter travelers along roads in the southern territories. He had been there before and knew he could rest and recuperate there without interruption. In a few days, a small group of his loyal men was scheduled to join him and escort him to lands far to the south, where he would live the rest of his life in luxury.

But it didn't turn out that way. One of the magical items Chadranther had stolen was Valedyr's *sphere of diminution*, which diminishes any human, demihuman, or humanoid creature to a few inches in height (see the following section for details). By the time Chadranther regained his senses, he had been fully diminished in size by the sphere, which had fallen to a soft landing in a fountain near the wayhouse. The sphere remains there yet, and Chadranther is still nearby. He is not strong enough to destroy the sphere by himself, but he is reluctant to leave the tiny domain he has created.

Chadranther's men arrived a few days later and were also diminished, despite his frantic attempts to warn them. A flood of refugees from the Kestrian civil war followed. Over the ensuing century, hundreds of creatures have been diminished by the sphere. Most have perished in this hostile world. A few, like Chadranther, have prospered, attracting bands of followers.

The PCs will soon find themselves in this strange world. If they wish to regain their natural sizes, they must destroy the sphere, which is certainly possible though a challenging and perilous task indeed. The creatures and encounters along the way offer opportunities for profit and cooperation, as well as danger. And, of course, the reward for their labors (the treasure Chadranther stole) is scattered throughout the area.

A great portion of the DM's responsi-

bility will be to describe everyday objects and events from an unconventional perspective. Don't just tell the PCs what they see; describe the surroundings from their point of view and let them figure out what they are looking at (see the boxed text in "The Wayhouse" for a sample of this type of description).

### The *Sphere of Diminution*

The *sphere of diminution*, known to some sages as "Valedyr's sphere" or "Chadranther's bane," is a magical item of unknown purpose, probably of extraplanar origin. It appears to be a hollow globe of perfectly transparent glass, about a hand's-width in diameter, though it is surprisingly heavy and does not float in water. It radiates alteration magic in a 65' radius. Other than destroying it, there is no known way to stop it from functioning or to permanently alter its effects.

The sphere projects a strong, continuous magical field around itself that greatly diminishes the size and mass of all human, demihuman, and humanoid creatures. A 6'-tall man, for example, would be diminished to about 1½" (1/50th his normal height). Spell ranges, magical areas of effect, and all other abilities are similarly diminished, as if measured by a diminutive measuring stick (see "Scale"). The mass of a diminished being or object is not reduced proportionately to this scale (i.e., 1/125,000th normal mass); instead, it is reduced by 1/2,500, so a 200-lb. warrior would weigh only 1.28 oz. after being diminished. Thus, normal breezes, though powerful to diminished characters, cannot automatically blow them away.

Beings eligible to be affected by the sphere are not immediately diminished when they enter its magical field. Such creatures have a natural resistance to the sphere's effect, which is overcome after half an hour (three turns). Racial or spell-induced magic resistance does not affect this period of time. Once a creature has spent three full turns in the magical field, it is diminished as described above, rapidly shrinking to a very tiny size. Until the sphere is broken, the creature remains at this drastically diminished size even if it leaves the sphere's field. Neither *wishes* nor the most powerful anti-magic fields can neutralize the effects of the sphere, which operates on unknown principles of energy manipulation and continually counteracts any other size-altering effects.

Some creatures that are not human, demihuman, or humanoid can, under some circumstances, be diminished by the sphere. Either these creatures have mind links with their masters that overwhelm their own rudimentary life forces, or they are human, demihuman, or humanoid creatures in animal bodies. Familiars, druids' *animal friends*, paladins' horses, and well-trained pets are examples of the former. *Reincarnated*, *shape-changed*, or *polymorphed* characters are examples of the latter. A PC cannot escape the effects of the sphere by changing into animal form.

Nonliving materials can sometimes be diminished by the sphere. Here we assume the existence of a "life force" that radiates from all natural-size living things. This force eventually saturates items held or worn by a creature, including clothing, weapons, and equipment. Since the sphere diminishes anything that contains the life force of a human, demihuman, or humanoid, these saturated items are diminished in size just as a living creature would be. In fact, any item that has been shaped or manufactured by a human, demihuman, or humanoid has been saturated with this life force and will be diminished after three turns in the sphere's field. Thus, even coins and cut gems will be diminished in size.

When a creature is diminished, it ceases to radiate life force due to a subtle interaction between its body and the sphere's magical field. A diminutive character could not, for example, sit on a natural-size gem and expect to diminish it. Because he has been magicked into an extremely unnatural state, the character does not radiate life force any more, and the gem cannot become saturated.

Eventually, life force leaks out of an inanimate object. If a saturated object is left untouched for about 150 years, the life force leaks away and, if the object is diminished, it then returns to its natural size.

The *sphere of diminution* cannot itself be magically diminished or enlarged by any means.

### Scale

There are two scales in this adventure. On the main map, one square equals 1' to normal-size characters. This is the *objective scale*. However, as far as the diminutive characters are concerned, one square equals 50', because they are 50 times smaller than normal. This is the *subjective scale* used throughout most of this adventure, unless otherwise noted.

Movement rates are unaffected in this adventure, so a PC's movement rate equals the distance in tens of yards (subjective scale) that he can walk in one round—if he is familiar with his setting. It is assumed that PCs move at one-third this rate during the majority of this adventure (in tens of feet per round), allowing them time to check their surroundings for traps, hostile opponents, and to get used to the bizarre environment they now inhabit.

Sighting ranges should be carefully considered by the DM. Though a diminished PC would have no trouble noticing a normal-size orc (who would seem to be over 300' tall!), the same PC would not automatically see a diminished goblin at the same distance as the orc. See the notes in the 1st Edition *DMG*, page 62 (making encounter ranges at 50-100 yards between randomly encountered diminished beings), and the 2nd Edition *Player's Handbook*, pages 117-118, for more information (counting sighting ranges on the subjective scale). The arrival of a "huge" normal-size being into a specific area of the wayhouse is instantly noticed by all diminished beings if they can see, smell, or hear the larger being.

Because of the extreme reduction in mass of all diminished items, diminished missiles have greatly shortened ranges. Reduce all missile ranges by a factor of three beyond the one-fiftieth reduction made by the sphere. Thus, ranges once measured in tens of yards are now measured in tens of feet (e.g., long range for a dagger is now 30', not 90'). This scale is generally the same as the indoor scale given in the AD&D 1st Edition rules, but this restriction does not apply to spell ranges.

The acceleration of a falling body is the same, whether or not the object is diminished. A diminished character would have to fall many subjective feet to reach a high velocity. Also, diminished characters are quite light and take much less damage when they fall from a height. For every 10 subjective feet fallen, a diminutive character takes only 1 hp damage. Thus, a fall of 260 subjective feet would do 26 hp damage. The maxi-

mum damage that can be done is 120 hp of damage—a fall from an objective-scale height of 24'.

### Destroying the Sphere

If diminutive characters ever want to return to their natural sizes, they must break the sphere. This would be easy to do for a normal-size character. The sphere is made of a substance with the fragility of normal glass (though it gets a +2 on the Item Saving Throw table, on page 80 of the *DMG*, because it is a magical item). However, diminutive creatures, only an inch or so tall, may not be strong enough to destroy the sphere with brute force alone. For ideas on how to destroy the sphere, see encounter area R (the fountain).

Once the *sphere of diminution* is broken, all diminutive creatures and objects grow to their natural sizes in only three rounds. The process begins slowly but picks up speed as the creatures and objects grow larger. This gives warning at the beginning and a dramatic effect at the end.

### Spell Modifications

Many spells are made to function under fairly specific conditions. When these conditions change, as in this adventure, such spells have unanticipated effects. A few spells will not work at all. The following classes of spells (or the spell-like abilities of magical items) have altered effects:

**Aerial movement** (priest spell *wind walk;* wizard spells *feather fall, levitate,* and *fly).* In the areas covered by this adventure, gusty winds are constantly blowing. Inside protected areas like the wayhouse buildings, these spells work normally. In exposed areas, a wizard using *fly* or *levitate* is buffeted back and forth in what are, for him, hurricane-force winds. Eventually, he crashes to earth at a distance of 50'-300' (1d6×50) from his take-off point, in a random direction, and must make a save vs. spells or take 1d20 hp damage from the impact. This does not apply to *wind walking* clerics, who are immediately hurled at high speed out of the adventuring area while in cloud form, traveling enormous distances until the spell duration ceases. Such a cleric travels 2-20 objective miles (100-1,000 subjective miles!) for every level he possesses (as per the spell's duration and local wind speed), crashing to earth when the spell duration ends for 1d100+20 hp damage. Wizards using *feather fall* outdoors are similarly affected, but travel only 100×2d10' in objective measurement per level of the caster, crashing thereafter as do clerics (since they have no control over their altitude).

**Summoning natural-size creatures** (priest spells *aerial servant, call woodland beings, conjure fire elemental, conjure earth elemental;* wizard spells *conjure elemental, invisible stalker, cacodemon, gate).* These spells do not work, because diminutive spell-casters are no longer strong enough to control—or attract the attention of—these creatures.

**Other summoning spells** (priest spells *conjure animals, animal summoning;* wizard spells *find familiar, monster summoning, conjure animals).* While these spells still work, they summon creatures that the spell-caster might not expect. For examples of small creatures and their subjective hit dice, see the random encounter tables in The Garden section.

**Reincarnation** (priest spell *reincarnate;* wizard spell *reincarnation).* The subject of the spell is reincarnated as an already diminutive creature. (This is one of the cases where an animal can be diminutive, because its life force continues to be that of the subject.)

**Size-altering spells** (wizard spells *enlarge, reduce,* and various uses of *wish, limited wish, alter reality,* and the like). See "The *Sphere of Diminution*" for details on the effects (or rather, lack of effects) of these spells in this adventure.

**Note:** Clerics have no difficulty regaining spells when they are diminutive, because their links with their deities are not affected by physical size or power.

### Starting the Adventure

There are several ways to introduce the PCs to this adventure. Some suggestions:

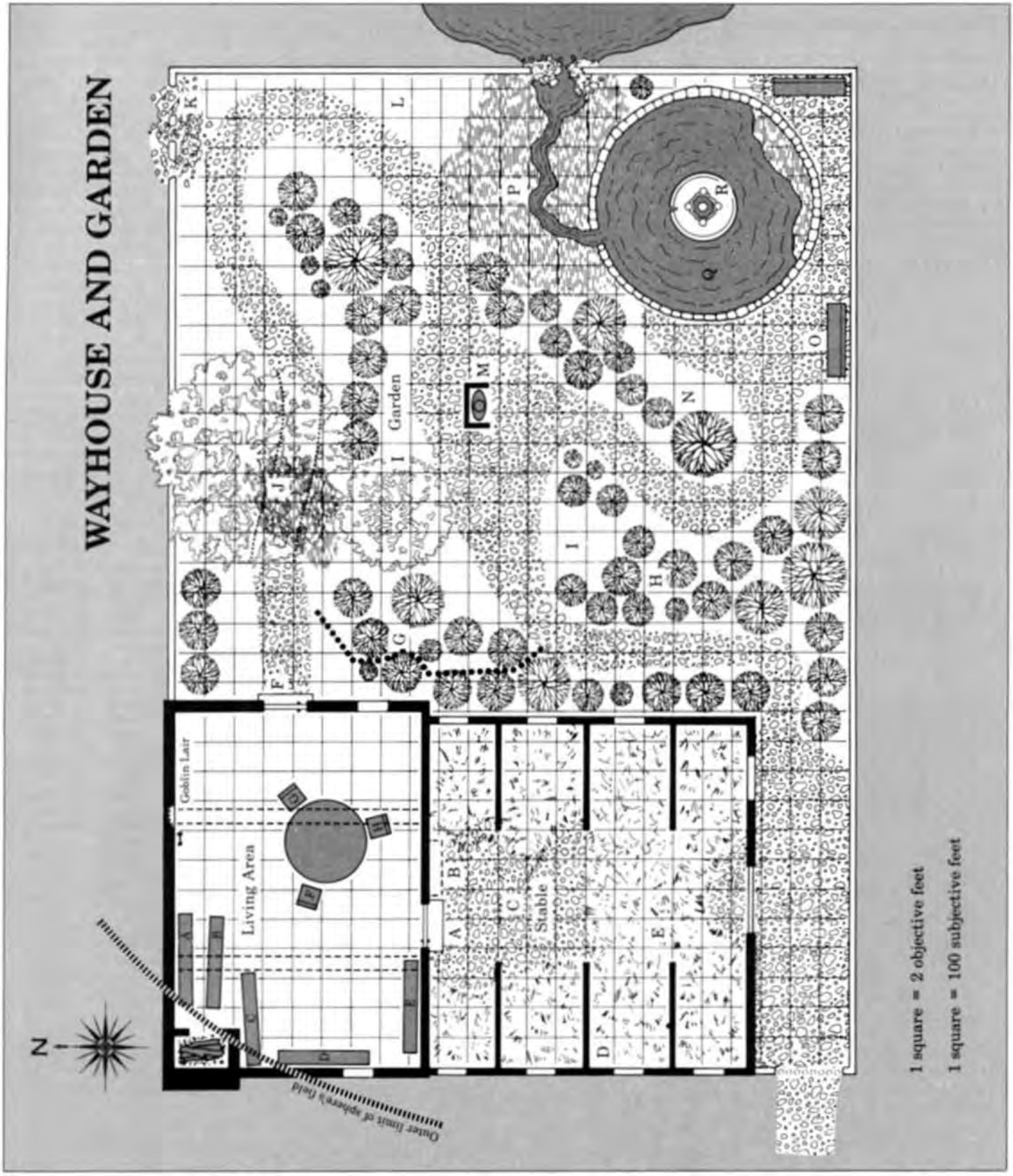
—During one of the PCs' adventures, an old diary comes into their possession. Written more than 100 years ago by a mercenary-adventurer named Radulph, it is one long, dreary story of looting, pillaging, and treachery. Toward the end, however, Radulph describes how he and his companions were approached by a half-elf who identified himself as "The Cat." This mysterious figure needed a few loyal men to escort him through the wild regions to the south, and he was prepared to buy that loyalty with a generous quantity of gold. Radulph and his friends agreed to meet their new master in a few weeks at a prearranged location (Radulph is deliberately vague on this point, and only the general location of this place can be ascertained). Just before Radulph set out on his journey, the diary was lost or perhaps stolen. Elven characters will make the connection between the name Chadranther and its Elvish meaning ("silent cat") here.

—A sage hires the party to find out exactly what happened to Chadranther and his loot. From his studies and certain other sources (such as the diary previously noted), the sage believes he can approximate the route Chadranther took when he fled from Valedyr's vaults (the sage doesn't know about the *teleport,* of course, but he knows about where Chadranther was going to meet his hired helpers). While the sage cannot afford to pay the party to perform this task, he is quick to remind them that the treasure Chadranther stole is "immense in value," including one powerful magical item he calls "Valedyr's sphere." Of course, the sage wishes to examine the sphere in detail.

—The party finds a tiny, perfectly proportioned suit of plate-mail armor, only half the length of a man's thumb, for sale in a Kestrian marketplace. It is an exceedingly fine reproduction of the real thing, though it is rusted and dented as though by the jaws of a large animal. The curio dealer knows only that it was found in the southern wilderness by a half-breed barbarian named Felsha who often went there to hunt and trap. Felsha disappeared on an expedition into the wild lands about three years ago and has not been seen since. The curio dealer can identify the general area where he disappeared and volunteers that Felsha was convinced that he know where a great treasure was located. Of course, most people thought he was a little soft in the head.

If the PCs decide to complete this adventure, they should be allowed to outfit themselves for a long wilderness journey. Then they can venture into the wild lands where, following the ambiguous reports of Chadranther's location, they will travel for two weeks.

The DM may draw a map of the area, though this is not strictly necessary. The encounter tables for uninhabited wilderness on pages 184-185 of the *DMG*


WAYHOUSE AND GARDEN
Garden
Living Area
Goblin Lair
Stable
Outer limit of sphere's field
N
1 square = 2 objective feet
1 square = 100 subjective feet

should be used. In addition, for every three or four days spent traveling along an old Kestrian road, the party encounters one of the wayhouses constructed long ago to house the Kestrian merchants who regularly traveled through the area (the main map shows the typical layout of a wayhouse, including a living area, stable, and small garden with a fountain). Most warehouses are still in good repair and provide welcome shelter from the elements.

These encounters serve to establish a routine that can be used when the party gets to the wayhouse where this adventure takes place. The DM must make note of: who takes first watch at night; whether the PCs state they are rearranging the furniture before they go to sleep (to block the doors, etc.); where the PCs' equipment is stashed; where their horses are placed in the stables. Instead of asking lots of suspicious questions, the DM should just watch what the PCs do. If the DM must make a few reasonable assumptions, remember that his word is final.

## The Wayhouse

After two weeks have passed, the PCs encounter (though without knowing it) the wayhouse where Chadranther met his bane. The following text shows one possible way in which events occur when this happens. If the DM has a specific routine available for the PCs when they encounter an uninhabited wayhouse, he should adjust this text to reflect the PCs actions if he simply wishes to read the text and start the adventure. Otherwise, the PCs are free to play out their arrival at the wayhouse. Note the way in which the scenery is described when the PCs are diminished.

> For half a month, you have faced great dangers from bandits, wild animals, and the impersonal forces of nature. Like many before you, your resolve is beginning to weaken in the face of endless leagues of howling wilderness. Quite frankly, you might have already turned back had you not come upon a trade road. The cobblestone track, almost completely obscured by dirt and weeds, still offers you hope. When Chadranther traveled through this region, he may have followed one of these roads. Perhaps over the next ridge you will find his bones, with unimaginable treasure scattered among them.
>
> Dark clouds are building in the horizon. You urge your mounts forward up the steep track. Night will fall soon, and you are anxious to camp before the storm hits. As you reach the top of the ridge, the shrieking wind slaps and claws at you, and a fine drizzle drifts down. Below lies a tiny valley. A swift, rocky stream runs through it, at one point roaring over a 30' drop onto great, flat boulders below. A few hundred feet upstream from the waterfall, the road crosses a shallow ford. On the other side of the stream is a wayhouse, still largely intact. It seems you may not have to spend a miserable night outdoors after all.
>
> Your mounts quicken their pace as they stumble down the steep incline and splash across the ford. The wayhouse, as you approach it, seems to be in good repair. The roof of the stable sags, and parts of the garden wall have collapsed, but the structure remains sound. As you come to the wrought-iron gate, the storm breaks over you with its full force, and torrents of rain pour down from the boiling clouds.
>
> Thunder crashes as you lead your horses into the stable. After a thorough search of the environs, you ascertain that the the place is deserted. The roof of the living area leaks slightly, and the room is damp and chilly. You light a fire and huddle around it, wearily eating tasteless rations and grumbling about the adventuring life.
>
> All of a sudden, you realize that you are feeling weak and dizzy. The room seems to shift and change around you. Too late, you try to scramble to your feet. Almost without warning, you find yourselves in a gigantic chamber, hundreds and hundreds of feet high. Your senses reel as they try to adjust to your new surroundings. The scale is vast beyond comprehension. Seconds ago you were packed close together near the fire for warmth; now only a few of your companions are visible far in the distance. They sit or stand on massive platforms suspended high above an abyss by great supports as wide as tree trunks. Not far away is a roaring fire so big it could engulf a small town. You are transfixed with terror, but the blaze does not seem to be moving toward you. For a moment no one speaks. A few huge globes of water sail out of the rattling darkness high above to crash onto the floor below. For a long moment, you are overwhelmed by the sheer vastness of the place.

As noted, the adventurers are diminished by the *sphere of diminution* only 30 minutes after reaching the wayhouse. It is very possible that the group may have split up by this time, with some members being in different areas of the house when the sphere's effects take hold. It is even possible that one or more PCs will be absent when this occurs, with the PCs having gone hunting or scouting in the countryside. The DM should try to have the PCs diminished while they are fairly close together unless he does not mind running several groups of PCs at once.

**Note:** From this point on, all distances are given in subjective scale, unless otherwise noted.

The wayhouse is actually made up of two adjoining buildings: a living area for travelers and a stable for their mounts. The walls of both buildings are made of rough, mortared stone. Doors in each area are thick and extremely heavy, requiring a total of 500 strength points to move once the PCs have been diminished. A 3'-high space exists between the bottom of each door and the floor, large enough for a diminished human to crawl through. Windows are set high up in the walls, 400' feet above the floor.

**Climbing:** The walls of the wayhouse count as rough surfaces with ledges, as per the *Dungeoneer's Survival Guide*, page 14. A diminished, unencumbered character can climb these walls at a rate of 12' per round (double that for thieves). Nonthieves have a base 40% chance of successfully climbing, modified (as with thieves) for dexterity and race. See the *DSG*, pages 14-19, for details on climbing, jumping, and rope use applicable to this adventure.

**Fires:** Diminished PCs need not worry about setting fire to the wayhouse as a result of their actions. First, such a fire would have to be very large and sustained for 2-5 hours (*fireballs* don't last long enough). Second, because of the wet weather, major fires tend to sputter out after another 2-12 turns. In short, touching off an inferno will take days of labor. If, after all this, the PCs persevere, the DM will have to use his own imagination.

## Living Area

This room contains a battered round table, three rickety chairs, and five benches. There is a small fireplace in one corner with the heraldic arms of Kestria carved over the mantlepiece. The room is gloomy, with only two high windows to let in light. There is no ceiling, only two thick oaken beams (outlined on the map) between the floor and the underside of the sloping roof. Floorboards cover the bare ground.

If the DM could not determine where each PC in this room was when the sphere diminishes them all, the players concerned can each roll 1d8 on this table:

- 1-4 PC is sitting or lying on a randomly selected bench (maximum three characters per bench)
- 5-6 PC is sitting on a randomly selected chair (one to a chair)
- 7 PC is standing on the floor (DM's choice of location
- 8 Player may choose his character's position in the room

Unless otherwise determined, the PCs have their vital equipment (i.e., weapons, armor, magical items) with them when diminished, but each PC has a 50% chance of having placed his backpack on the floor nearby.

Anyone on a bench or chair is trapped on top of it; benches and chairs are now 80' high. Their legs are made of smooth hardwood (smooth, cracked, and slightly slippery, as per the *DSG*, page 14), and only thieves can climb them without tools (at 6' per round). Others must use rope in the descent. The tops of the benches have no projections to anchor ropes, but a spike can be securely driven into the wood in three rounds. Walls adjacent to the furniture can be scaled, although it may be necessary to jump a gap between the bench and wall. According to page 17 of the *DSG*, a character with a running start can jump at least 6'-9' (1d4+5). A dexterity check on 1d20 must then be made to grasp the wall. Failure on either of these rolls means a fall of 80' to the floor below.

The letters A-H on the wayhouse map indicate benches and chairs. The distance between bench A and the wall is 7', between C and either wall 8', between bench D and the wall 12', and between bench E and the wall 3'. At their closest point, benches A and B are 8' apart, and this gap can be jumped without making the extra dexterity roll described above.

### Goblin Assault

About 70 years ago, a family of goblins was diminished in this room. They were no match for the rats that swarmed beneath the floorboards, so in desperation they made a long, perilous climb up a wall to the rafters, where they made their home on a narrow ledge.

The goblin tribe has grown and become prosperous by ambushing people who are diminished in the wayhouse. From their lofty aerie high in the perpetual shadows, they watch as the sphere claims new victims, then take advantage of the creatures' isolation and disorientation to launch a surprise attack, using techniques that have been refined over many lifetimes. Their motive is simple greed: They want the traveler's equipment, weapons, and magical items. What is not useful to them they trade to Chadranther (area 2) in exchange for a few barrels of his wine. Chadranther also pays well for slaves, so the goblins do their utmost to subdue the PCs and take them alive by calling for surrender.

There are 54 **male goblins** (hp 4 each; leather armor made from rat hide (no

shields); one club, one sling, and 2-20 stones each), 34 **female goblins** (hp 3 each; no armor or weapons), and 48 **young goblins** (hp 1 each; no armor or weapons). Algol, their chief, wears *leather armor +2* and an elaborate leather harness studded with 11 glittering citrines, each of 50-gp base value. He is always accompanied by two **bodyguards** (hp 7 each) who wear suits of high-quality chain mail of halfling or gnomish manufacture (worth double normal value) and carry morning stars.

The oldest member of the tribe is Yakkar, the witch doctor. Yakkar is much wiser than the chief. He recognizes overwhelming odds when he sees them. If the tribe is in great danger, he advises Algol to order a retreat. Algol waits to follow this advice for 1-6 rounds, to save face. Yakkar is far more powerful than Algol, but appearances are important to chiefs.

**Algol:** AC 4; HD 1+1; hp 8; THAC0 19; *leather armor +2*, morning star.

**Yakkar:** AC 6; MV 3; C4/W4; hp 17; THAC0 17 (as HD 3); Dmg by spell or weapon type; potion of *climbing* in a steel flask. Yakkar knows the following spells at the fourth level of ability: (priest) *cure light wounds, light, cause fear, chant, resist fire;* (wizard) *affect normal fires, dancing lights, ventriloquism, invisibility, levitate.*

If either the chief or the witch doctor is killed, the remaining goblins retreat to their lair in an orderly fashion. If both Algol and Yakkar are slain, there will be a panic-stricken rout.

The assault proceeds as follows:

1. The moment the PCs are diminished, 40 goblin warriors are lowered on long ropes from the roof beams to attack anyone isolated on the benches and chairs.

Only benches A, B, and E and chair H can be reached from the beams, unless the PCs have rearranged the furniture. Each occupied bench or chair is attacked by 10 goblin warriors. The remaining 10 goblins are held in reserve to support their side in battle. If necessary, they could land either on the tabletop to bombard characters on chairs F and G with sling stones, or on the floor to capture PCs or steal their diminutive backpacks.

The goblins try to attack by surprise. Lowered quickly and silently by teams of females and young in the shadows 400' above, they may touch down before one of the adventurers sounds the alarm. The goblins gain surprise on a roll of 1-3 on 1d6. Otherwise, they are discovered when 10'-100' above the tops of the benches and chairs, descending at a rate of 60' per round. Once they have been seen, the goblins fire their sling stones (they can load and fire at a –2 to-hit penalty due to extensive practice) but are otherwise helpless targets (–2 to AC). Any fire-based spell cast at the goblins sets their ropes alight if such equipment fails a save vs. magical fire; the ropes burn through in a single round. Two goblins and their ropes are affected for every 1" in diameter of the spell's area of effect.

If the goblins are blocked from their ropes in the course of combat, they become demoralized, fighting at –1 to hit. If a PC tries to climb a goblin rope, there is a 25% chance that the females and young above will mistake him for a goblin and pull him up. Otherwise, there is a 5% chance per round that they will decide to drop the rope. The climbing rate is 20' per round (40' per round for thieves), so most PCs take 16 rounds to reach a beam from the top of a bench or chair, or 20 rounds from the floor. If the brave PC actually makes it to the top, he will be able to spread havoc by forcing the helpless noncombatants to drop the ropes, possibly tipping the scales in the battle below. Of course, he will also be cutting himself off from his comrades and will have to fight any remaining goblin warriors alone.

2. If any group of PCs proves especially tough to defeat, the remaining 10 goblin warriors are lowered into that area to reinforce their comrades. It takes them six rounds to reach the top of a bench or chair from the roof beams above.

Yakkar, the witch doctor, casts *levitate, resist fire,* and *invisibility* spells on himself, then floats down to a point where his *chant* spell will help the beleaguered goblin warriors. Because the *chant* gives away his position, Yakkar is –2 to hit instead of –4. Only in true desperation will he break his *invisibility,* perhaps to blind someone with a *light* spell or use his *ventriloquism* spell to startle an enemy spell-caster.

3. If the party is losing to the goblins, Chief Algol (easily identified in his glittering harness) descends with his bodyguards and enters the thick of the fighting. The bodyguards absorb most of the attacks; the chief's objective is to keep his tribe's respect, not to lose his life. If the situation is too dangerous, he lands on top of the table instead and shouts encouragement at his people.

The table is 140' high. Unknown to the goblins, one of the table's four legs has a ladder of handholds cut into it all the way from the floor to the tabletop, which has no overhang and can thus be reached quite easily. This ladder can be climbed at a rate of 30' per round (60' per round for thieves). This leg touches the western corner of chair G and may be used as a way to get off the chair or up to the tabletop. The other three table legs are too smooth to be climbed.

This ladder was hacked out long before the goblins arrived in the room, by a dwarf who chanced to be sleeping on the table when he was diminished, thus finding himself trapped. The dwarf later met a grisly fate out in the garden, and his work has gone unnoticed by the goblins, who are not exceedingly observant creatures.

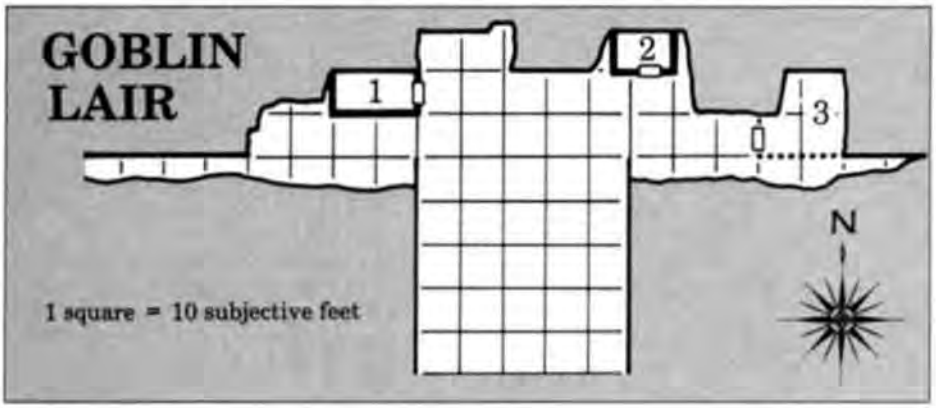
4. If the goblins win, they hoist the captured PCs and treasure up to their lair. As little evidence of the encounter will be left as possible; bodies will be dropped through cracks in the floor. The goblins will be satisfied to capture one or two PCs and will go to no great lengths to catch the rest of them. If they have no loot as yet, however, the goblins will resort to desperate tactics, pursuing escaped PCs into other areas or laying siege to an occupied bench or chair that cannot be reached from above, until the PCs run out of food and are forced to come down.

### Goblins' Lair

At the point where the eastern ceiling beam meets the top of the north wall, 400' above the floor, there is a narrow ledge on which the goblins live. At night, when there are no enemies around, the glow of many torches shines from this area, and the sound of coarse voices drifts faintly down. The goblins have never been attacked in their lair, so no guards are set. Attackers automatically gain surprise for two segments.

A narrow ledge runs along the top of the wall between the goblins' lair and the western beam.

The easiest way to get up to the lair is via a ladder of handholds and rusty spikes that runs all the way from the floor up to the ledge. This is the remains of the original goblin tribe's climb up the wall in search of a safe home. It increases the climbing rate to 24' per round (48' for thieves) with no chance of falling.




The chief and witch doctor each have a crude shelter for privacy. The rest of the goblins live on the open ledge. Each goblin warrior possesses a few valueless items taken from victims over the years, a crude grappling hook, his personal 425'-long rope (made of normal-size light thread), and 1-6 gp.

**1. Chief's Hut.** Algol lives here with his three wives and 10 young. Mixed in with their belongings are 17 pp and three dirty fur-trimmed cloaks worth 80 gp each. In one corner is an empty wine barrel with the letter "C" stamped on it.

**2. Witch Doctor's Hut.** Yakkar lives in a tiny hut that stinks of incense and dried fungus. His treasure—615 gp, 750 sp, a potion of *extra-healing*, and an ivory bracelet worth 600 gp—is concealed in a deep hole under his sleeping pallet. The hole is trapped with well-hidden poisoned spikes, and anyone who scoops up the treasure by hand has an 80% chance of getting scratched. If a save vs. poison is failed, the scratch becomes infected and the victim loses two points each of strength and dexterity per day until one characteristic reaches 0, when he is incapacitated and unable to move. After two more days, the PC dies. He can be cured at any time by a *neutralize poison*, *cure disease*, or *heal* spell. If the victim's hands are protected by gauntlets, modify the saving throw by +6.

**3. The Cage.** This sturdy wooden cage is big enough to hold 10 adult humans. Tied to the bars is a single prisoner, a young woman.

**Talin:** AC 8; MV 6 (12); I4; hp 5 (12); THAC0 19; Dmg by spell or weapon type; S 13, D 16, C 16, I 16, W 9; Ch 15; AL LN. The numbers in parentheses show Talin's statistics before torture and starvation. The following spells remain in her memory: *change self, phantom armor, detect invisibility.*

Only 10 days ago, Talin and a companion named Ash were diminished in the stable. Almost immediately, they were surrounded by eight wild-looking men mounted on rats, who took her friend captive. Talin managed to escape to the living area, where a group of goblins captured her after a brief fight. She lost her spell books in the fight and believes they were destroyed. As far as Talin can tell, the goblins were going to sacrifice her in a few days. If she is freed, she tries to convince the party to help her rescue her companion, but she will go alone if she must.

### Under the Floor

There are many cracks between the floorboards, some big enough for a diminutive human to squeeze through. The drop to the hard-packed earth below is 20'.

In this rank-smelling area live six **rats** (hp 20 each) the size of horses. Within one round of the PCs' entrance, these creatures scuttle out of the gloom, their red eyes gleaming. Three rats attack initially, and one additional rat shows up every round for three further rounds.

The rats' nests, built against the south wall, are large piles of twigs and straw littered with human and goblin bones. A battered conical helmet is also visible. Four rounds of searching in these nests will uncover a scroll case containing three gem-inlaid wooden tokens (worth 50 gp each) and two 100-gp diamonds. Near the scroll case lies a silvered footman's flail with snakeskin wrappings on the hilt (worth 20 gp). Hidden under the wrappings is a clerical scroll with three spells: *augury, neutralize poison,* and *glyph of warding.*

### The Stable

The flagstone floor of this room is partly covered with a thick layer of rotting straw as high as a tall man. There are eight stalls separated by 200'-high partitions, where the party's mounts were probably placed (if necessary, determine randomly which stalls are occupied). On the northern wall beside the door is a shelf, and there are pegs around the room to hang riding tack, etc. The room is well lit by many windows. A large bird's nest is visible high in the rafters, directly above the shelf (don't tell the players, but it's deserted).

The horses, huge mountains of flesh, shift nervously in their stalls. Their hooves are easily big enough to crush 10 men in a single step. Saddles and bridles will have burst off as they were diminished, without damaging the horses.

Most of this room is under the control of Chadranther, the half-elf who is indirectly responsible for the adventurers' predicament. Chadranther's main problem at the moment is arranging to remove the horses from the stable before they starve to death; their rotting carcasses would make the stable uninhabitable for months. He will do this in a few days by opening the outer door with an elaborate system of ropes and pulleys and scaring the horses out with fire and loud noises.

**A. Guard Post.** This step is 25' high. A single figure sits cross-legged on the edge of the step near the southeast corner, facing outward. Nearby, a ladder slants upward from the straw-covered floor to lean against the step.

The figure is a half-orc fighter named Rekkel. He wears leather armor, and crude metal horns hang from his belt. Rekkel is dozing, so he will be automatically surprised by someone sneaking up on him quietly. He has orders to raise the alarm if someone appears under the door. If he gets the chance, he will blow his horn, summoning the "rat soldiers" from Chadranther's lair.

Rekkel is mainly interested in saving his own skin. If he is captured, he tells everything he knows and even offers to guide the party, though he tries to escape at the first opportunity. He has rarely been out of this room since he was

diminished and captured here one year ago, but he can give general information about Chadranther and his organization.

**Rekkel:** AC 8; MV 12; F3; hp 15; #AT 1; THAC0 18; Dmg by weapon type; AL NE.

**B. The Shelf.** Represented by the outlined area, the shelf juts out from the wall 200' above the floor and commands a panoramic view of the stable. It can be reached by a rope ladder hanging from its western edge (climbing rate is 24' per round, or 48' per round for thieves).

Three men have just finished assembling a ballista (see pages 108-109 of the *DMG* for details), set on a swivel mount at the western edge of the shelf. Two of the men operate the ballista while their leader acts as a spotter. All are excellent artillerists. If they are alerted by the sentry's horn or the sounds of battle, they draw up the ladder and bombard the enemy with ballista missiles (they have 25). They can hit any area of the room except directly under the shelf and behind obstacles like the stall partitions and the step.

If one of the PCs climbs the rope ladder, the leader bombards the intruder with arrows while his men bring the ballista to bear on the rest of the party. The artillerists will never cut the ladder loose, as it is their only way to get down.

The ballista is of little use to the PCs unless they have proficiency in it or one of the artillerists can be "persuaded" to show them how it works. PCs without proficiency with this weapon have a –6 to hit targets with it.

**Artillerymen:** AC 8; MV 12, F1; hp 6, 4; leather armor, short swords.

**Leader:** AC 6; F4; hp 23; THAC0 17; chain mail, long sword, short bow, 12 arrows.

**C. Cleared Area.** This area is mostly clear of straw. Within four rounds of the alarm being sounded, eight warriors enter from area D, brandishing long spears while whooping and yelling. They are mounted on trained **rats** (hp 26, 21, 20 (×2), 17, 16, 14, 10) that can attack in the same round as their masters. The rat-mounted soldiers attempt to surround the party, cutting them off from retreat and ordering them to surrender or die. The soldiers take captured PCs to their lair (area D), where the adventurers are imprisoned and eventually integrated into Chadranther's tribe.

**Warriors** (8): AC 6; MV 9; F1; hp 10, 8 (×2), 7 (×3), 6 (×2); ring mail, small shields, spears.

Combat in this area, especially spectacular displays of magic, is bound to terrify the party's horses. To simulate the horses' reaction, add and subtract points as shown below, then check the following table:

| | |
|---|---|
| Per round of fighting | +1 |
| Per spell that causes sudden noise, light, strange smells, or frightening illusions | +2 |
| Per wound causing 4 hp or more damage to a **horse** (300 hp each) | +3 |
| Per round of quiet | –1 |

**Horse Reaction Table**

0-2 Horses are quiet and relatively calm.

3-4 Horses are restless. Anyone who is inside an occupied stall has a 25% chance per round of being stomped on (roll dexterity or less on 1d20 or take 10-100 hp damage).

5-6 One randomly selected horse wheels out of its stall. Chance to be stomped on is as above, but anyone in the room is liable for damage (except people on the shelf).

7+ Terrified horses bolt out of their stalls and plunge about the room, wreaking havoc for 2-12 rounds. Chance of being stomped on is 50% per round.

Horses, even the more intelligent ones, will not recognize their diminutive masters. The *really* intelligent ones (a paladin's war horse, for example) will have been diminished and captured by Chadranther's men.

The soldiers will not retreat until they are outnumbered 3 to 1 by their enemies. Rats whose riders are killed immediately run back to their lair (area D3).

**D. Chadranther's Lair.** An old rat lair is now the entrance to Chadranther's home, a series of burrows that houses a motley collection of humans and demihumans, most of whom have lived here all their lives.

Except where noted, **warriors,** both men and women, have the following statistics: AC 8; MV 12; F1; hp 6; THAC0 20; Dmg by weapon type; AL LE; leather armor, long swords. About half of their weapons are made of solid silver, made by their smith from normal-size old silver coins. Since the silver in these weapons is not diminished, it will not grow when the PCs destroy the sphere. The weapons are valuable only as curiosity pieces. Of course, the adventurers may not realize this.

Most of the people in Chadranther's lair are superstitiously afraid of their master, whom they call "The Cat." Some believe him to be a demigod, for he never seems to grow old (they don't know he is a half-elf), and he has great magical powers. Even his physical appearance is in dispute, for he rarely appears in public. When he does appear, however, his people obey his orders without question.

The entrance to the lair is a high, round tunnel strewn with rat droppings that runs under the west wall of the stable at a steep angle. It is never guarded. Like the rest of the lair, this tunnel is well lit with *continual light* spells. The area descriptions assume that the PCs have invaded the lair rather than entered it as captives or in disguise.

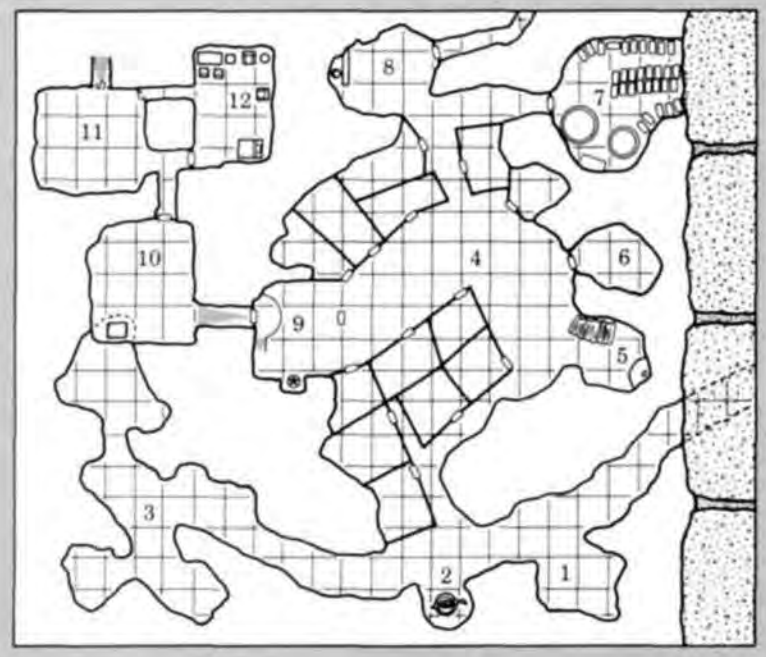
**D1. Storeroom.** This room contains harnesses, saddles, food for the rats, and many large baskets with dark blue stains on the insides. There is usually a group of eight men stationed here (the "rat soldiers" described in area C). They are sitting on the ground playing dice and making a great deal of noise with their shouting, cursing, and laughing. They are playing for wooden tokens with which they can buy drinks in Chadranther's tavern (area D8).

**D2. Well.** This 40'-deep well is half full of icy water. Anyone who falls in takes 1 hp damage per round from the cold. Beside the well is a leather bucket attached to a thick rope that is tied to a spike in the wall. The spike will support 150 lbs. (on a diminutive scale, of course) before breaking. The sides of the well are slippery with slime.

Ten feet down the well is a secret door. This can be detected on a 4 in 6 chance by anyone looking into the well, because light shines faintly through cracks around the door. Anyone climbing into the well without a light is sure to find the door.

The secret door leads to a tiny room, 7' long by 4' wide by 5' high. On the floor is a copper piece with a *continual light* spell cast on it, a week's supply of iron rations, a dagger, a chamber pot, and two leather pouches with identical contents: small piece of leather, some tiny hairs encased in gum arabic, a copper piece, a bit of rat fur, a glass rod, and a crystal vial containing sweet oil (spell components). Chadranther hides here in des-

# CHADRANTHER'S LAIR
## Area D



1 square = 5 subjective feet

perate circumstances, such as a major attack by the PCs. He won't use the room if he thinks it has been discovered.

**D3. The Rat Burrows.** Loud squeaks and scrambling sounds come from these chambers, accompanied by a truly terrible stench. This area is completely dark. Twelve rats live here in untidy nests of straw. Eight of the **rats** (hp 21 each) are trained to carry the "rat soldiers." Those rats that survived the encounter in the stable will have returned here. The other four **rats** (hp 15 each) are trained to attack but will not carry riders. The rats have no treasure.

If the PCs try to enter these chambers, the rat keeper tries to stop them. He is a wizened, slightly crazed old man who has lived underground so long his skin is almost transparent. The rat keeper announces in a cracked voice that no one is allowed to disturb his children. His "children," it turns out, are the rats, who tolerate only his presence in their lair. The keeper attacks (by pummeling and grappling) only if someone hurts a rat. He wears an electrum ring set with lapis lazuli, worth 75 gp.

**Rat keeper:** AC 7; MV 12; T3; hp 10; THAC0 19; S 16, D 17, C 13; AL CN; unarmed (uses nonlethal combat rules).

In the 8'-high ceiling of the northernmost chamber is a 12' shaft leading up to area D10. The shaft is lined with downward-pointing spikes that reduce the chance of successfully climbing to the upper level by half.

**D4. Living Chamber.** Most of this large chamber has been divided into rooms with mud-brick walls. The air is thick with the smells of wood smoke and years of human habitation. If they have been alerted by the "rat soldiers," 14 warriors (from areas D7, D8, and D9) are waiting here with swords drawn. If the alarm has not been sounded, children are running around in the area, laughing and playing. Combat in this place will be confusing, noisy and crowded, with people running every which way. The DM should keep up the pace of play as much as possible in this area to keep the PCs off balance and contribute to the general confusion.

The unmarked rooms each hold one or more families. Each room yields 2-40 gp if searched for two rounds per room. Each room holds 1-8 cowering **noncombatant humans** (hp 2 each), mostly women and children. The bolder ones may try to hinder the PCs by scolding them and throwing rubbish, food, and (full) chamber pots at them. This abuse causes 1 hp damage to a random PC for every three rooms searched. Good-aligned PCs who lose their cool and kill noncombatants are in alignment trouble.

**D5. Smithy.** A small forge is built into the east wall of this room, with a narrow chimney above it. It is used only at night so the smoke won't attract attention. Lumber is piled to the ceiling in the northern part of the room, and against one wall are five 2'-diameter discs of solid silver. Examination reveals these to be normal-size silver coins of truly ancient mintage. A boy is chipping off chunks of silver that the metalsmith is using to make tools and weapons. The smith, Keledrim Sparkstriker, is a dwarven cleric of Abbathor (*Unearthed Arcana*, page 111).

**Keledrim Sparkstriker:** AC 8; MV 6; C4; hp 24; THAC0 18; Dmg by weapon type; S 18, W 15; AL NE; hammer. He knows the following spells: *curse, command, cure light wounds, precipitation, protection from good, hold person, know*

*alignment, withdraw.* Keledrim wears leather armor with a chain-mail belt of steel, silver, and mithral plates, worth 500 gp.

**D6. Holding Cell.** Barred on the outside, this cell is presently empty. Captured PCs will be imprisoned here for at least one week—longer if Keledrim's *know alignment* spell reveals they are of good or chaotic alignment. At some point, the PCs will be asked to join the tribe. Depending on their responses, they will be accepted (with suspicion) or sacrificed to Chadranther.

**D7. Wine Cellar.** The door to this room is locked with a massive padlock and guarded by two **warriors** (hp 9, 7). In the southern part of this room are two large vats and a winepress. The back of the chamber is stacked with crudely made barrels full of blackberry wine, each stamped with the letter "C." By any standard, the wine is very good.

A tall, blond-haired man toils in this room, loading the winepress with blackberries twice the size of his head. He is chained to the wall just out of reach of the wine barrels (the chain takes 25 hp damage before breaking). This is the companion of Talin (see the "Goblin Lair," area 3).

**Ash:** AC 8; MV 12; F3; hp 26; THAC0 18; Dmg by weapon type; S 16, D 16, C 15, I 15, W 8, 17; AL CN.

If freed, Ash is eager to join the party. He is a fearless, fun-loving, and resourceful individual. Unfortunately, he is also totally unpredictable and often dangerous. More than most of his alignment, Ash believes that anarchy should rule supreme. He can be charming and compliant when it pleases him (about half the time). Otherwise, he is cruel, taking great pleasure in breaking things, trashing rooms, etc. Sooner or later, Ash does something that upsets the PCs' well-laid plans. Afterward, he pretends to be extremely apologetic for his behavior.

Talin is infatuated with Ash (his alignment notwithstanding). He's the type of man women love to reform, and Talin will follow him wherever he goes.

**D8. Tavern.** Ten **warriors** (AC 10; MV 12; hp 6 each; no armor, long swords) squat on the floor drinking wine from wooden mugs and eyeing the barkeep speculatively. Theowyn—a short, fat former merchant—sits nervously behind the low bar, guarding a half-empty wine barrel. A loaded heavy crossbow with the word "Peacekeeper" scratched on it is placed conspicuously atop the counter. Theowyn has another nine bolts under the bar. When the PCs enter, Theowyn climbs on top of the bar, aims the crossbow at the party over the heads of the warriors, and screams "Get out! Get out! Get out!" in a high-pitched voice. He is actually scared stiff. If he lives long enough to fire the bolt, he jumps off the bar and hides behind it, trembling.

**Theowyn:** AC 10; MV 12; zero-level human; hp 3; THAC0 20; Dmg by weapon type; AL CG.

Theowyn was captured five years ago while a member of an ill-fated trading expedition and now works as the wine distributor, a dangerous job that he hates (most of his predecessors were knifed by their patrons in disputes over who got the biggest mug). If spared, Theowyn readily reveals the location of the key to the wine cellar, which is hidden in the heel of his left shoe along with 150-gp garnet.

A small door in this room opens onto a passage that leads to a hidden entrance on the surface, on the outside wall of the wayhouse. The upper entrance counts as a secret door.

**D9. Shrine.** The door to this room is guarded by two **warriors** (AC 5; hp 7 each; chain mail, long swords). A niche in the south wall holds a 5'-high clay statue of a man wearing a robe decorated with stars. Offerings of coins (1-20 gp) and flower petals the size of shields are laid before it. If the PCs were captured no more than three days ago, their magical items and money are also here; otherwise, these items are in the treasure room (area 11).

The room is dominated by a raised platform of earth, 5' high, with steps running up to it from the south. Here "The Cat" appears occasionally to review sacrifices. The door behind the platform is painted with a stylized skull-and-crossbones. It is trapped so that anyone opening it from this side releases a spray of mild acid at 5½' height. Anyone who is standing on the platform and is at least 5' tall must save vs. poison or be blinded for 1-100 turns.

**D10. Guardians.** Two **gnolls** (hp 12, 9; battle axes) live here. They meet the PCs at the top of the steps and thus get a +1 to hit due to height advantage. One gnoll has an uncut diamond (worth 200 gp as is) concealed in a pouch under his armor.

As the PCs fight the gnolls, they notice a short human figure standing in the middle of the room. He wears a dirty blue robe embroidered with yellow crescent moons, and a pointed black hat.

**Shike:** AC 6; MV 12; T3; hp 12; #AT 1; THAC0 19; Dmg by weapon type; D 18; AL LN; short sword.

Shike is under the influence of Chadranther's *charm person* spell. He has orders to identify himself as Chadranther and warn away intruders. If that doesn't work, he is supposed to wave his arms around while chanting meaningless words. This imitation of spell-casting will not fool a real spell-caster who makes a successful wisdom check on 1d20. If forced to fight, Shike surrenders when he loses more than half his hit points. He will not reveal his true identity, however.

In the southwest corner of the room is a 20'-deep pit from which can be heard the squeaking and scrambling of rats. The pit is lined with downward-pointing spikes.

The door to the north stands open. Examination reveals that it can be barred from this side.

**D11. Treasure Room.** This room is full of loot seized from diminutive travelers over the years. There are two small bales of silk (25 gp each), 10 bear pelts (5 gp each), 50 glazed earthenware plates (2 gp each), six large clay jugs containing pepper (20 gp each), two ancient red dragon skulls (250 gp each to an alchemist), a 5'-square cracked mirror (25 gp), and a locked strongbox containing 1,750 gp and 2,000 sp. Behind the mirror, which leans against the wall in the northeast corner, is concealed a low passage to Chadranther's room.

A secret door in the northern wall opens onto a staircase that leads to a hidden entrance on the surface, about 2' west of the stable wall.

**D12. Chadranther's Room.** Chadranther has just finished casting an *ESP* spell on himself when the PCs arrive. The main door is barred from the inside and will take 30 hp damage before being destroyed. There is an inconspicuous peephole in the door. If Chadranther sees the whole party go into the treasure room (area 11) to ogle his treasure, he quietly slips out to area D10, barring the door there before he goes to organize his people to repel the attack. If the PCs try

to batter down the door to his room, Chadranther sneaks *invisibly* through the concealed passage to area D11 and escapes via the secret door to the surface. He has a considerable advantage over the party in that he can divine their positions and intentions with his *ESP* spell.

Chadranther never risks his life unless the rewards are substantial. Even if he truly believes that he can overpower the party, he attacks only if he has a clear escape route. Ideally, he should escape to confront the party at the end of the adventure (after they have destroyed the *sphere of diminution*).

**Chadranther:** AC 4; MV 12; M7/T8; hp 35; THAC0 17; Dmg by spell or weapon type; S 14, D 18, C 14, I 16, W 16, Ch 16; AL NE; scimitar, garrote. He wears a *ring of protection +2* and carries potions of *speed* and *healing*. Chadranther knows the following spells: *armor, friends, magic missile* (×2), *ESP, invisibility, mirror image, lightning bolt, suggestion, charm monster.*

Chadranther is the most cunning, devious, and treacherous character the party will encounter in this adventure. If, for example, he thinks the party is strong enough to destroy the sphere (his most devout wish), he might try to steer them in that direction by contriving to send them messages later on in the adventure. At the same time, he will be preparing to obliterate the PCs as soon as the sphere is destroyed.

Chadranther's sole flaw is his arrogance. He likes to gloat and show off when he has the upper hand. Starved for intellectual conversation, he may delay the execution of an intelligent, educated prisoner for a few days. He is never reckless, however, and he always plans an avenue of escape from every situation.

His room contains simple furnishings including a bed, two armchairs, and a table. There is a half-full barrel of wine in one corner. Hidden under it is a silk purse containing the key to the strongbox in the treasure room, five garnets worth 200 gp each, and an unadorned silver ring worth 1 gp. The ring has a tiny spike on the inside of the band (90% undetectable to normal scrutiny), that will scratch the finger of anyone who puts on the ring. The spike is poisoned, so the first person who gets scratched must save vs. poison or take 6-36 hp damage.

Chadranther's three traveling spell books are in a backpack on the table. They contain his memorized spells plus: *read magic, charm person, write, message, strength, clairvoyance, water breathing,* and *dig.* Chadranther takes the books with him wherever he goes.

**E. Straw.** This area is covered with an 8'-thick layer of damp, rotting straw through which tunnels have been pushed in all directions. Movement is at half normal speed, and there is a 10% chance per round of meeting a returning "rat train" from area 4.

While the PCs are in this area, they are attacked by four men. Deserters from Chadranther's lair, these men have become masters of guerilla warfare. They sneak up behind the party (surprise on a 1-4 on 1d6) and unleash volleys of darts at the weakest-looking member from a distance of 10-40'. If chased, the men pretend to be afraid and run away, but if a pursuer is separated from his companions, the guerillas turn and mob him. Each man has 100 gp in coins and jewelry.

**Deserters** (4): AC 8; MV 12; F2; hp 15, 14, 10, 9; THAC0 19; Dmg by weapon type; AL CE; leather armor, 15 darts each.

## The Garden

After so many years of neglect, the garden is a wilderness of vegetation. Flower beds have become jungles of weeds and grass that reduce movement to a crawl. Heavy blades must be used like machetes to hack through the thick stems. Hedges have spread and thickened into three-dimensional twilit mazes of massive interlocking branches through which the PCs could travel without ever touching the ground. There are two trees (the branches of which are represented by the outlined areas), so unimaginably huge that entire towns could nestle in their boughs. Only the cracked stone paths offer relatively unrestricted travel, if the PCs are willing to expose themselves to hungry eyes.

In one corner of the garden is a scummy pool with a fountain, long quiet, in its center. The garden is surrounded by walls of mortared stone, 300' high, that may be climbed like the walls of the wayhouse. Symbols of wealth for the Kingdom of Kestria during its golden age, the gardens were maintained by a small army of traveling caretakers.

Outside the garden wall, life is much more dangerous for the diminutive traveler. The terrain is extremely rugged (including wide rivers and swamps). Huge monsters abound (wolves, hawks, snakes, etc.), though they avoid the wayhouse and the smell of hunters it has. The nearest outpost of civilization is at least 8,000 subjective miles to the north. Of course, the PCs' problems would not be over if they reached a human community, for they would probably be captured and sold as curiosities or displayed in a private zoo.

If the PCs try to escape into the wilderness and are not soon convinced of the hopelessness of their journey, it is incumbent on the DM to set them in the right direction. One method might be an encounter with a group of diminutive human travelers returning from a four-month journey into the wilderness. With wild eyes, they describe the horrors they encountered along the way: sudden rains that create great seas of mud to drown men and their rat mounts before they have time to run for high ground; savage wolverines that dig out the most secure hiding places and swallow screaming men whole as their companions listen helplessly; and the wide river to the north, whose swift current has drawn many boats down to the waterfall, where the helpless occupants are pounded to bits on the rocks below.

The area outside the wayhouse and garden is not detailed in this adventure, the DM's imagination may run free. Groups or whole societies of diminutive creatures may be placed there. Most but certainly not all such communities will have reverted to a state of barbarism.

Terrain, both inside and outside the garden, may affect speed of travel. Movement rates are reduced to the following fractions:

Grass: 3/4

Swamp: 1/2

Bush branches: 1/2 in any horizontal or vertical direction. Shields may not be used in this area, due to the necessity of holding on with at least one hand.

Path: Normal

Rain reduces all movement by a factor of half again over the above modifiers, and it reduces vision to 20'. The rain begins during the evening when the PCs are diminished and continues to fall for 12 hours thereafter.

For example, a PC moving at a rate of 12 will cross 50' of outdoor terrain in the grass in slightly over half a minute. If it is raining, it takes about one minute to do this.

Random encounters are possible throughout the garden. Every turn, roll 1d100 and modify the result as follows, then consult the encounter tables:

+15% if the party uses some form of illumination at night.

-5% if the PCs are all moving but are extremely silent (e.g., thieves, elves without metal armor, etc.).

-25% if the party is stationary and hiding.

**Grass Encounters**

| | |
|---|---|
| 70 and under | No encounter |
| 71-74 | 1-6 ticks |
| 75-76 | Centipede |
| 77-78 | 1-12 worker ants |
| 79-80 | 1-12 warrior ants |
| 81-82 | 1-4 beetles |
| 83-84 | Snake from area K |
| 85-86 | Special (see "Random Encounter Notes") |
| 87-88 | 1-3 rats |
| 89-92 | Weasel from area F |
| 93 | Five halflings from area N |
| 94-95 | 2-8 human warriors |
| 96-97 | Web spider |
| 98+ | 4-7 gnolls |

**Bush Encounters**

| | |
|---|---|
| 75 and under | No encounter |
| 76-77 | 1-6 ticks |
| 78 | Centipede |
| 79-80 | 1-20 worker ants |
| 81 | 1-10 warrior ants |
| 82 | 1-4 beetles |
| 83-84 | Weasel from area F |
| 85-86 | Special (see "Random Encounter Notes") |
| 87-88 | 2-8 men |
| 89 | 1-4 rats |
| 90-92 | Praying mantis |
| 93-97 | Web spider |
| 98+ | Five halflings from area N |

**Path Encounters**

| | |
|---|---|
| 60 and under | No encounter |
| 61-63 | 1-10 worker ants |
| 64-65 | 1-6 warrior ants |
| 66 | 1-4 beetles |
| 67-68 | 1-4 wasps |
| 69-76 | Wind gust |
| 77-84 | Snake from area K |
| 85-86 | Special (see "Random Encounter Notes") |
| 87 | Wolf spider |
| 88-96 | Weasel from area F |
| 97+ | Minstrel |

**Swamp Encounters**

| | |
|---|---|
| 55 and under | No encounter |
| 56-67 | 1-10 ticks |
| 68-70 | Centipede |
| 71-78 | 1-6 beetles |
| 79-80 | Special (see "Random Encounter Notes") |
| 81+ | 12 kobolds |

**Waterborne Encounters**

| | |
|---|---|
| 33 and under | No encounter |
| 34-35 | Special (see "Random Encounter Notes") |
| 36-80 | 1-3 fish |
| 81-89 | 1-4 wasps |
| 90+ | Wind gust |

Except for the humanoids and demihumans, all these creatures have standard magic resistance, animal intelligence, neutral alignment, and no psionic ability. They may or may not be similar to giant animals of the same species. For example, the weasel does not suck blood.

**Random Encounter Notes:**

**Ant, worker:** There is a 25% chance that these ants are herding 3-18 aphids, small green insects that, when stroked, yield drops of intoxicating liquid. The gnolls at area L greatly prize this substance.

**Fish:** Fish attack only those creatures swimming in the water, but they will nudge boats, having a 25% chance per round to overturn or destroy them, tossing victims into the water.

**Gnolls:** These gnolls have 2-8 gp each.

**Halflings:** This is a hunting party armed with spears.

**Kobolds:** These kobolds are armed with axes. The largest kobold has a silver earring set with bloodstones, worth 200 gp. This encounter can occur only once.

**Minstrel:** AC 4; MV 9; Ra 7; hp 41; #AT 1; THAC0 14; Dmg by weapon type; AL CG; chain mail, shield, long sword. Aubrey the minstrel is not a bard, but he likes to encourage this misconception. He makes a living traveling between the halflings (area N), Chadranther's lair (area D), and communities outside the garden, escorting trade goods, telling stories, and bringing news. He carries a lute worth 750 gp. Aubrey is content with his life and cheerfully tells the PCs

that they are doomed to spend their lives in this place, so they had better make the best of it. As a human ranger, Aubrey has a very real hatred of the gnolls and goblins in this area.

**Spider, web:** This encounter starts when a randomly selected PC blunders into a web, where he will be stuck fast until he can be cut free in 1-4 rounds.

**Wasp:** The wasps carry their victims to area O. Fire attacks that cause damage will burn the wasps' wings off so they can fight only on the ground.

**Weasel:** The weasel likes to use hit-and-run tactics. It will grab a victim in its jaws if both of its attacks succeed against the same opponent, then run off with him to its lair (area F).

**Wind gust:** PCs must save vs. petrification or take 1-4 hp damage as a sudden gust of wind knocks them head over heels. On the pond (area Q), PCs take no damage but are thrown into the water.

**Special:** What happens, if anything, is up to the DM. Some examples follow:

*Caterpillars:* An area 200' square in front of the party is covered with dozens of large caterpillars with orange-red bristles. If approached, the caterpillars rear up threateningly and hiss, as if ready to attack. They are harmless (hp 9 each).

*Hailstorm:* Boulders of ice crash to the ground. The PCs have one round to reach cover, after which they are attacked by 1-3 hailstones per round. Each hailstone "attacks" as a 3-HD creature, doing 1-10 hp damage per hit.

*Birdmen:* A small flock of birds skims over the garden in tight formation. A sharp-eyed PC might swear he saw humanoid figures mounted on the birds' backs, trailing banners of green and red. Most inhabitants of the garden have heard stories of a community of "bird-men" who live somewhere near the waterfall (an area the DM may develop, if he chooses).

*Visitors:* A group of three orcs (not yet diminished) wanders into the area looking for loot. Their statistics are so great in comparison to those of the PCs that it is pointless to quantify them, but they attack as 15+ HD creatures. The orcs have a small (10%) chance of noticing the PCs if the party is hiding.

Fighting the orcs is a brave but suicidal act. The monsters are more interested in capturing the PCs alive than in killing them (PCs are AC 0 vs. the orcs' attacks because of the size difference). If the PCs are captured, the orcs carry them into the wayhouse and put them on the table, where the huge creatures study the adventurers curiously. Anyone who attempts to entertain the orcs will not suffer the indignity of being poked and prodded (which inflicts 0-3 (1d4–1) hp damage per round). Of course, the orcs will be diminished in three turns, after which—revenge! One of the orcs has a potion of *heroism*.

This encounter should not severely hurt any PC. It should, however, give the party a few bad moments!

**F. The Step.** This step is 25' high. Beneath it is a hollow where a **weasel** (hp 54) has made his home. This animal, a huge, snarling monster roughly the size of a dragon—and with a similar temperament—pounces on the first person who crawls under the door from the wayhouse. Emphasize the size and speed of this ferocious creature.

In the weasel's lair are several diminutive items. A human skeleton wears two jeweled bracers worth 200 gp each, and a waterproofed scroll case contains three yellowed pieces of parchment. The first bears a rough map of the wayhouse, with the location of the goblin lair in the living area and Chadranther's lair (area D) clearly marked. The word "gateway" is scrawled beside the latter. The second paper is sealed with black wax that was sprinkled with tiny chips of chalcedony while still soft. It is a scroll of *protection from undead*.

The third paper is sealed with green wax sprinkled with grains of topaz. It is a *cursed* scroll; anyone reading it is affected by a *scare* spell (no saving throw). For the next three days, he is followed by a malevolent, invisible spirit that causes 1-4 inexplicable accidents per day; this is simulated by having 1-4 saving throws or to-hit rolls be failed once successfully made. After the three days have passed, the *curse* lifts, and no further accidents occur.

**G. The Vineyard.** Blackberries grow in profusion in this area. A path, indicated by the dotted line on the detailed map of the wayhouse, winds through the area, sometimes along the ground, sometimes through the branches on swaying bridges high in the air. At the point indicated by the letter G is a small clearing where 10 **warriors** of Chadranther's tribe (AC 6; MV 6; hp 6 each; scale armor, spears) are temporarily camped. Their leader, an elven fighter, lies concealed in the bushes nearby.

**Elven leader:** AC 4; MV 12; F3; hp 20; THAC0 18; Dmg by weapon type; D 18; AL CE; leather armor, long sword, short bow, 12 *arrows +2*, 173 gp.

Along the path in either direction, about 30' from the clearing, is a hidden trip wire (detected as a normal trap). If this is triggered (50% chance per PC), a heavily weighted framework of wood crashes down from above, pinning the person who tripped the trap as well as the two characters directly behind him, unless they roll their dexterities or less on 3d10. The wood is covered with razor-sharp thorns and causes 2-12 hp damage in addition to pinning the victims. A total of 40 strength points is required to lift the framework; this takes three rounds.

The 10 warriors seek to engage the PCs in combat as soon as possible. Their leader, however, will slip through the bushes, trying to pick off his enemies from hiding with his arrows.

There is a 10% chance per turn to encounter a "rat train" on the path. This is composed of three men (same statistics as above) leading three **rats** (hp 20, 17, 15) carrying large baskets loaded with berries. These rats are not trained to fight and will not do so unless cornered. They are being led back to Chadranther's lair, where the blackberries will be made into wine.

**H. The Forbidden Land.** This entire region of bushes is given a wide berth by most intelligent creatures. Every 50' or so along the perimeter, warnings have been set up in the form of heads on stakes. Most of the heads belonged to gnolls, but a few humans share the dubious privilege.

The branches in this area have been cunningly woven together, creating a barrier that slows movement to MR 3, whatever the PC's normal movement rate. Finally, every turn there is a 50% chance of encountering a trap, which has a 90% chance of being triggered by the lead PC. This is a 20'-deep pit trap filled with 1-3 spikes, doing 3-18 hp falling damage and involving 1-4 hp damage from striking 0-2 (1d4–2) spikes, if the PC involved fails a dexterity check on 1d20.

This area is the home of 19 **grugach elves** (hp 7 each; chain mail, spears) and their **leader** (hp 19; *elven chain mail +1*). Within one turn of the PCs' entering their domain, the grugach surround

the PCs and demand that they turn back immediately. If they are refused, the elves attack. If the PCs choose to be reasonable, however, they are escorted back the way they came.

The elves know (or have guessed) much about the nature of the mysterious sphere, and they answer polite questions as long as it pleases them. If the PCs express an interest in destroying the sphere, and if they are on good terms with the grugach, two young elves accompany them to help in this task. These elves, Ariel and Kili, are sociable by the standards of their race but seem aloof and unfriendly to the PCs. They fight bravely but leave the party if they think it is abandoning its task.

One of the older elves in the tribe (he is too fastidious to talk to the PCs directly or come near them except to fight) has a potion of *water breathing* that he is willing to exchange for another potion. The grugach have no other treasure.

**I. Anthills.** The ground within 200' of these anthills is swarming with ants. Roll random encounters normally. In addition, however, 1-10 **worker ants** (hp 3 each) investigate the PCs every round, tugging at their equipment and carrying away loose objects, including swords and daggers. Very small PCs (like gnomes and halflings) count as "loose objects." The ants are only as large as small dogs but are capable of carrying up to 120 lbs. each.

In the event of combat, an additional 1-4 **warrior ants** (hp 9 each) appear every round. Both types of ants have unlimited numbers in this area.

One hundred subjective feet east of the northern ant colony stands a small ant hill, only about waist high, with huge numbers of what appear to be dead ants scattered around it. While these ants seem to be freshly dead, investigation reveals that they are alive but coated with a strange oily liquid that seems to act as a preservative.

Buried just under this hill is an normal-size flask containing *oil of timelessness*. Like other normal-size items in the garden, the flask had lain forgotten in Valedyr's treasure vaults for more than 150 years, and the life force had leaked out of it. Though Chadranther touched the flask momentarily when he picked it up, this contact did not last long enough to saturate the item with his life force. Thus, the flask never became diminished. The stopper has been leaking slightly for a few years, and ants brushing against it have become coated with the liquid. The flask is still nearly full.

**J. Muddy Magic.** Here, the branches of the tree (the area outlined on the detailed wayhouse map) dip as low as 50' above the ground. Moisture drips from the leaves and collects in a muddy hollow below. On the path, the mud is barely 2' thick; off the path it is 3'-4' deep. The water dripping from the leaves is mildly enchanted by a magical item in the tree above. Anyone detecting for magic near here notices the water seems to glow faintly, as does the mud.

The water is enchanted as it flows through an abandoned squirrel hole 300' up the trunk of the tree. The hole contains a normal-size *jewel of flawlessness* with nine facets. It is too heavy for the PCs, in their diminutive state, to remove from the hole.

**K. Collapsed Wall.** The garden wall has collapsed here into a great mountain of jumbled bricks. Climbing this heap takes no special skill, but movement is reduced by half due to the difficult terrain. The whole pile is honeycombed with tunnels that are inhabited by a tremendous (60' long) old **snake** (hp 45), but it will not attack the PCs unless they venture deep into its lair. In the meantime, it advertises its presence with the occasional scrape of scales on rock or a long hiss.

After two turns of searching, the PCs will find a tunnel marked with charcoal Xs that leads deep into the snake's lair, a small natural cave no more than a widening of the passage. Here are the remains of a campfire, years old, and a scrap of rusted chain mail. Nearby, something glimmers in the bottom of a 20' crevasse. Examination reveals the source to be huge eggs, too heavy for a man to lift. None of them are ready to hatch. Among the eggs lies a small locked iron box with a *Leomund's trap* spell cast on it. The box contains 100 pp, 120 gp, a crystal flask containing pure alcohol (as well as a 500-gp diamond that is 90% undetectable while surrounded by the liquid), and a glass vial with the words "Holy Water" scratched on it. The clear, bitter liquid inside is a potion of *climbing*.

If the PCs spend more than four rounds in this room, the sounds of the snake become louder and louder until it suddenly bursts out of a tunnel and attacks. If the PCs leave this room quickly, the snake follows them to the surface and attacks there.

**L. Gnoll Country.** A tribe of 20 **gnolls** (hp 9 each) lives here in crude shelters of sticks and leaves. The gnolls sit around all day; they are addicted to aphid juice, which is slowly affecting their minds. They are only 50% likely to attack intruders immediately, 25% likely to welcome them as fellow gnolls for 1-20 rounds, and 25% likely to ignore them completely for 1-6 rounds. If they do attack, use the modifiers on pages 82-83 of the *DMG* for moderate intoxication. Each of the gnolls has 1-20 gp, and one gnoll has three blocks of *incense of obsession* in his hut.

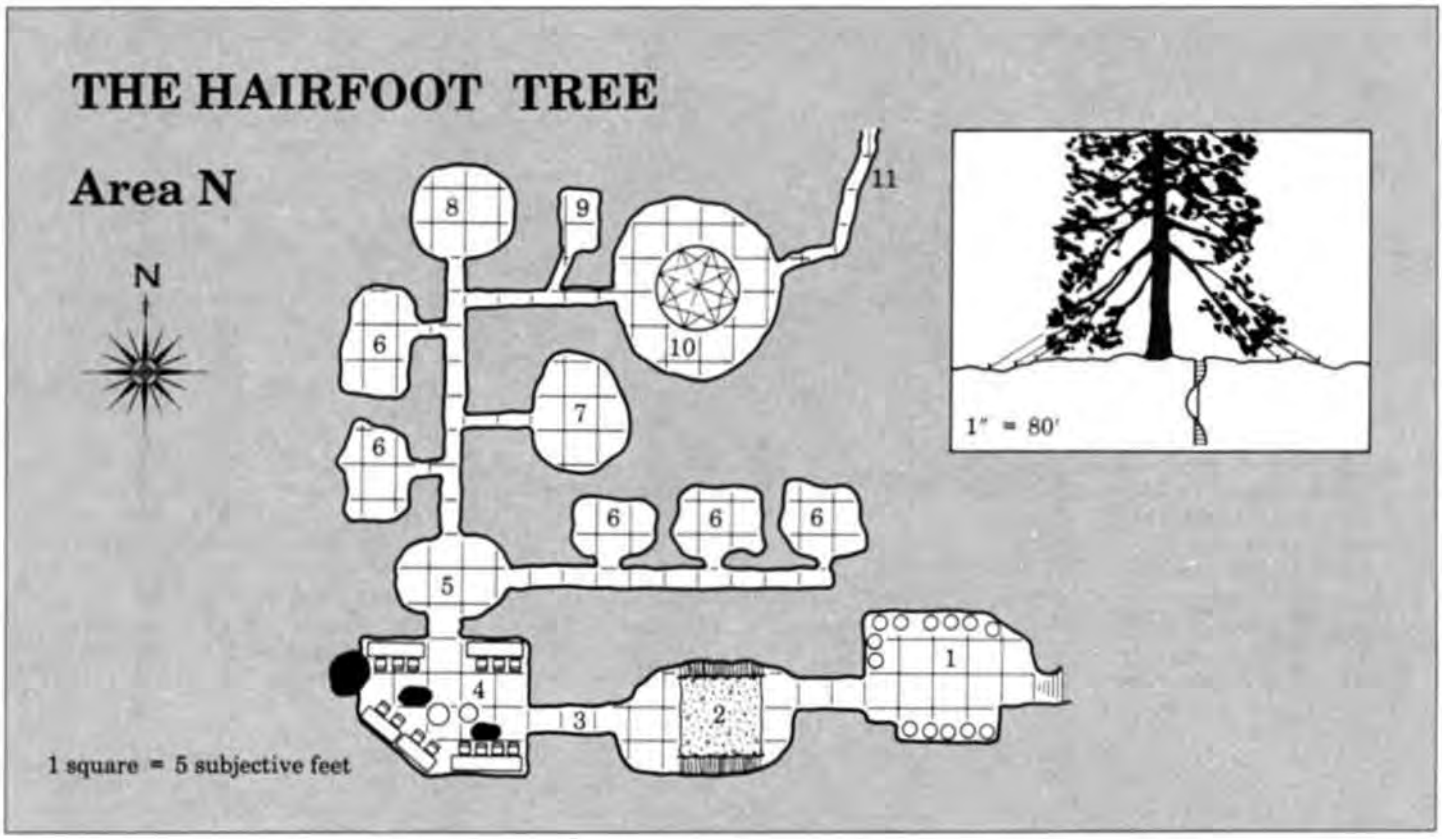
**M. Shrine.** Like most wayhouse gardens, this one has a small shrine to an obscure god of travelers. The idol is protected from the elements by a simply roofed brick structure, open in the front. The crude stone effigy depicts a smiling, bearded, 125'-tall old man sitting cross-legged.

When the party arrives, four **gnolls** (hp 9 each) are lighting a pile of wood and leaves that they have just placed around the base of the statue. As smoke fills the semi-enclosed space, faint cries for help can be heard from the top of the statue.

The gnolls are trying to smoke out Marlowe, a plump human cleric. Not particularly wise for a priest, Marlowe has been getting into trouble of this type for years. He is, however, one of the only diminutive creatures who has seen the sphere and lived to tell of it.

Many years ago, Marlowe was a member of an adventuring group called the Gray Company. Soon after they were diminished, they realized that the only way they would regain their former size would be to destroy the sphere, which they had heard rumors about from the natives of the area. They set out on a journey that cost the lives of two of their number almost immediately. The first, a thief, was carried off in the middle of the night by a monster the size of a house, and the second, a fighter, left on a scouting mission to the north and never returned.

With the help of a friendly tribe of halflings, they reached the second tier of the fountain (see area R), where they found the sphere. Marlowe bent his full power to destroying the infernal device—




and failed utterly. He sees this failure as a divine judgment and is resigned to spend the rest of his life here.

As Marlowe's company camped the next night, they were set upon by a horde of giant spiders, and all but Marlowe were bitten to death. Terror-stricken, he made the long journey back and now makes a living as a sort of traveling physician, depending on the kindness of the more "civilized" races in the area.

If saved from the gnolls, Marlowe climbs down the statue and thanks the PCs. He uses his spells to help them if he can, and he recounts his adventures and asks the PCs to find the two missing members of his party. If they are dead, he says, the party can keep their treasure. Marlowe doesn't know it, but the thief ended up in area F and the fighter in area K. Both are dead.

Marlowe refuses to accompany the PCs, saying he is too old and afraid. He recommends they go to the pine tree (area N) where the halflings live, if they are looking for a safe place to rest.

**Marlowe:** AC 10; MV 12; C5; hp 17; THAC0 18; Dmg by spell or weapon type; W 12; AL NG; staff; spells: *cure light wounds* (×2), *protection from evil, augury, slow poison, speak with animals, cure disease.*

**N. The Hairfoot Tree.** A small band of halflings lives in burrows under this pine tree. Diminished in the wayhouse over 20 years ago, they lost some of their best fighters to the goblins. Soon after they settled in this area, the halflings became involved in a relentless war with the gnolls that roam the garden; they get a +1 to hit while fighting these creatures, due to the hatred that has built up over the years.

While the halflings sometimes trade with Chadranther, they don't trust most "big folk" farther than they can throw them. With creatures of their own stature, however, they have been entirely too trusting for their own good.

A couple of days ago, the burrows were taken over by a band of **gnomes** (hp 5 each; short swords), who had been the halflings' guests for about a year. Unbeknownst to their hosts, the gnomes are evil and have been plotting to gain control of the burrows for some time. In the middle of the night, they crept from room to room, murdering most of the halflings in their sleep. A few halflings woke up in time and are now fighting a losing battle for control of their home.

The leader of the gnomes, Ombar Sembelin, is described at area N4. His followers are a tough-looking bunch, wearing tattered black cloaks and burnished chain-mail armor decorated with studs and chains. Each of them has 2-40 gp worth of coins and jewelry. Ombar's mistress, Noriel (a noncombatant), is described at area N7.

As the PCs approach the tree, they notice wisps of smoke rising from beneath it. This is the remains of a fire the gnomes made on the night they took over the burrows.

The halflings have created an enclosed space under the pine tree by pegging the ends of the lower branches to the ground. This creates a formidable, spiky barrier that takes five rounds to cut through with sharp instruments. Each of the branches is hung on the inside with copper bells that alert the gnomes if the PCs try to force an entry here. A successful *remove traps* roll silences the bells along a 10' length of perimeter. If the

gnomes are alerted, all of those in area N1 come to investigate.

There is a single entrance in the barrier, on the east side of the tree. Four **gnomes** (hp 6 each) are stationed here. Day or night, they have a oil lamp burning. Just inside the entrance is a 20'-square area covered with a layer of yellow powder. This is flash powder, which the halflings laboriously collected from a common woodland plant. When the PCs appear at the entrance, the gnomes act terrified. They grab the oil lamp and run back through the powder, then throw the oil lamp into it. Give the PCs enough time to state their actions (to be exact, give them four segments, which is enough time for the gnomes to get to the other side of the powder). Depending on how late they start pursuit, the PCs may be able to catch the gnomes before they throw the oil lamp. Alternatively, the party can retreat. If they state no actions, assume that the PCs are standing in the entrance looking in the direction of the powder.

This powder is extremely flammable, burning in a brilliant flash of white light that blinds anyone facing it for 3-18 rounds unless a save vs. petrification is made. A PC standing in the powder when it goes up sustains 2-12 hp damage from the shock of the explosion. The laughing gnomes run back to area N1 (they love a good joke).

The area under the pine tree is devoted to the growing of edible fungi. Most of the crop has been burned recently; the ashes are still smoldering. Near the tree trunk is an open area where the main entrance to the burrows is located. Carved on the first step is the word "Welcome" in the halfling tongue. The chambers in the burrows are 7' high, the passages 5'.

**N1. Storeroom.** Winding stairs lead down to this cool, dry room. It is pitch dark, and the walls are stacked with large baskets. Most contain preserved food, but four are full of flash powder. If a torch or lantern is lit in this room, there is a 1-in-8 chance per round that powder floating in the air will ignite, starting a chain reaction that blows up the powder in the baskets. The explosion inflicts 4-24 hp damage on everyone in the room and blinds PCs for 3-18 rounds unless they save vs. petrification. After the explosion, the ceiling starts to crumble; it collapses in four rounds, doing 2-16 hp damage to those below.

There are 15 **gnomes** (hp 7 (×5), 6 (×7), 5 (×3)) in this room, relying on their 60' infravision to see. If they lose more than half their number, they retreat to area N3. If the party lights torches or lanterns, the gnomes retreat immediately (for obvious reasons).

**N2. The Pit.** Most of this darkened room is taken up by a 20'-deep pit floored with a layer of mud and garbage. Insects scuttle through the muck, including three **centipedes** (hp 10, 8, 6). Careful observation of the pit reveals a half-submerged halfling body, dead a couple of days. Under it is a bag with 42 pp.

There are two narrow (halfling-size) wooden bridges around the pit. The middle 5' section of the south bridge has been purposefully weakened so that anyone weighing more than 100 lbs. will break through and fall into the pit. The centipedes crawl curiously over a fallen PC, but as long as he lies still or moves *very* slowly, they do not attack. The bugs become hostile only if they are attacked or if the person in the pit makes sudden movements. Make this encounter as tense as possible by describing the centipedes' actions in excruciating detail (their nervous movements whenever the PC so much as twitches, the poison dripping from the centipedes' mandibles as they nibble suspiciously at the PC's clothing—that sort of thing).

**N3. The Last Stand.** If they suffered heavy losses in the storeroom, the remaining gnomes will have retreated here and immediately begun chopping down the wooden supports that hold up the roof of the passage. This takes two rounds. After three more rounds, during which the ceiling begins to sag and crumble, the roof collapses causing 2-16 hp damage to those below. If the PCs get to them before they finish chopping down the supports, the gnomes make a last-ditch defense here.

**N4. Kitchen.** The ceiling of this large room is supported by the massive roots of the tree above. There are low tables and chairs against the walls, and two large cauldrons of stew bubble over coals in the center of the room. The area is unlit except for the dim, blood-red illumination from the coals. The air is oppressively hot and smoky. Lying on the ground in front of the northern entrance is the body of a gnome, bristling with arrows (it has been stripped of valuables).

Ombar Sembelin, the gnome leader, is hiding behind the cauldrons. Long ago, Ombar drank several potions simultaneously (see page 119 of the *DMG*) and now is permanently fire resistant (as per a potion of *fire resistance*). As a side effect, he is sensitive to cold (+2 hp damage per die from cold-based attacks). He carries three perfectly weighted throwing knives and a string of five pearls worth 150 gp each. Hidden inside his elaborate belt buckle is a vial containing three doses of type B ingestive poison (*DMG*, page 20). While he is amazingly ugly and weak looking, Ombar is a cunning and dangerous adversary.

**Ombar Sembelin:** AC 3; MV 6; F3/T3; hp 25; THAC0 18; Dmg by weapon type; D 16, C 18, Ch 16; SA/SD see either edition of the *PHB*; AL CE; chain mail, *broad sword +2* (used two-handed), three throwing knives.

If anyone comes within 4' of Ombar, he pushes over the cauldrons. Nearby characters must make a dexterity check or take 2-8 hp damage from the boiling liquid. If the PCs stay clear of the cauldrons, Ombar remains hidden. When the moment seems right, he tries to kill the nearest PC.

During combat, Ombar scoops up handfuls of hot coals and throws them at the adventurers. He can throw three handfuls per round; they do 1-4 hp damage each and may set robes or cloaks on fire (see the *DMG*, page 80, for saving throws). His throwing range is 30'.

Ombar has a disconcerting habit of darting around during combat, using his size to advantage to confuse his larger opponents. Instead of fighting the same PC round after round, he attacks a random PC every round. Ombar fights to the death.

**N5. Common Room.** This room is lit by guttering oil lamps. There are signs of a recent battle here. The casualties, mostly halflings, have been piled at the northern exit to form a 4'-high barrier. The bodies have been looted of valuables. If the PCs attempt to pass this barrier, arrows whistle out of the darkness at them from area N8).

The floor 10' beyond the barrier has been strewn with broken glass (this is a little extra protection against a surprise attack by the halflings). Barefoot PCs who pass through this area take 1 hp damage per round. Halflings don't always go barefoot, but those in this area (and possibly some PCs) do.

**N6. Living Areas.** Halfling families once lived in these cheerfully decorated rooms. Each room now contains several dead halflings, killed in their sleep. The rooms have been looted and contain nothing of value.

**N7. Museum.** An extremely lifelike stuffed gnoll stands in the middle of this darkened room, facing the entrance. The illusion of life is enhanced by the fact that the statue is swaying slightly. Hiding behind it is a very drunk female gnome. She is Noriel, Ombar's mistress.

**Noriel:** AC 6; MV 6; T4; hp 8; #AT nil; D 18; AL CN; no armor or weapons. As a female from a traditionalist clan, Noriel was never taught fighting skills, although she has all the other abilities of a 4th-level thief. Noriel has been trapped in this room by halfling snipers for hours and has been drowning her sorrows in a large barrel of wine. Now in a very good mood, she is friendly to the PCs unless severely provoked.

If spared, she is able to give the party information on the halflings and the situation here. However, she is only semi-intelligible and prone to cruel practical jokes, such as picking the PCs' pockets, sneezing loudly when she is supposed to be quiet, and tying weapons and equipment down so they won't be available in critical situations. She is very good at doing these things without being noticed, even when drunk (treat all success rates as if picking pockets).

There are two wine barrels here, with the letter "C" stamped on them. One is empty, the other nearly so. On the walls hang trophies: snake fangs as long as broad swords, a stuffed rat head, and a pair of whale-size fins. There are also six diminutive paintings of famous halflings that would be worth 100 gp each to the right collector. Finally, there is a detailed map of the garden with all animal lairs clearly marked.

**N8. Workshop.** There are two **halfling archers** (hp 6, 5; studded leather armor, short bows, eight arrows each) at the entrance to this room who fire at anyone who approaches from the passage to the south. They treat the PCs as enemies unless the party convinces them otherwise. If anyone approaches to within 20', or if the halflings run out of arrows, they bolt down the passage to area N10.

The room is dimly lit by oil lamps. It is full of equipment and looms that the halflings use to weave beautiful spider silk robes and cloaks. On the floor are three coils of spider-silk rope (50' each) that are twice as strong and weigh half as much as normal rope. A rack of spears includes five harpoons. Three disassembled boats, big enough to hold five medium-size creatures each, rest against the walls.

**N9. Sheriff's Quarters.** This tiny room is cluttered with papers and books. Nothing worth anything can be salvaged from this mess, unless the PCs have a deep interest in the finer points of halfling law. There are a couple of barrels of Chadranther's finest wine in the back of the room.

On a high shelf is an irregular globe of glass as big as a crystal ball. It is half filled with green liquid. If someone reaches for it, the globe, which is precariously balanced, rolls off the shelf. After informing the PCs of this event, wait three seconds. If anyone tries to grab it during this time, that character should roll his dexterity or lower on 3d6 to catch the globe. If he fails, or no one thinks to grab it quickly enough, the globe must save vs. fall with a –4 modifier or break, as per the *DMG*, page 80.

The liquid inside the globe reacts with air to create a 10'-diameter gas cloud that dissipates after one turn. All those within the cloud must save vs. poison or fall asleep for 1-12 hours, taking 1 hp lung damage per hour. If the entire party is affected by the gas, the halflings from area N10 come in and tie them up after the gas has cleared away.

If the globe is retrieved intact, it is worth 300 gp.

Concealed behind the globe is a hole containing 912 gp, 696 ep, 620 sp, a *ring of free action* and a magical flute that, when played, kills all bedbugs and lice in a 30' radius (worth 200 gp).

**N10. Diamond Chamber.** This high, domed chamber is dominated by a huge normal-size diamond, at least twice as high as a tall man, resting on a low stone platform. Its facets glitter with a piercing radiance in the light of torches on the walls. Though slightly flawed, it is still worth 3,000 gp.

The surviving halflings have gathered in this room, on the east side of the diamond. As the adventurers enter, the halflings lever the huge stone off its base, sending it rolling ponderously in the party's direction. The first three PCs in line must make dexterity checks on 1d20 to avoid being run over. If they fail, they take 4-24 hp damage and are trapped under the huge gem. If they succeed, each PC has a 50% chance of jumping back into the passage and a 50% chance of jumping to one side and being trapped in the room when the diamond slams into the wall, blocking the entrance. One hundred combined strength points are required to move the diamond.

Five **male halflings** (hp 4, 3 (×3), 1; studded leather armor, spears) stand in front of their families, ready to defend them. This does not include the two archers from the workshop (area N8) who may be here by now. There are also six female and four young **noncombatant halflings** here (females: hp 3 each; young: hp 1 each).

The halfling leader, **Burton the Sheriff** (AC 10; MV nil; F4; hp 23 (1 currently); #AT nil; Dmg nil; AL NG) lies mortally wounded on the floor. He will die in one turn without a *heal* or similar spell (*cure wounds* spells are not sufficient).

Though very weak, Burton takes the initiative and begs the adventurers not to attack. He thanks them for destroying the treacherous gnomes (assuming they have). Now that he is dying, Burton must find someone to take his place as sheriff, but he fears that none of his remaining people are cut out for the responsibility. If the PCs consent to do their best to destroy the sphere, exterminate the thrice-cursed gnolls, and ultimately lead his folk back to their ancestral homelands (100 leagues to the south), he bestows the title of sheriff on one the PCs, preferably a halfling. If no halfling adventurer is available, a dwarf or elf will be chosen over other races. Under the circumstances, a gnome PC goes to the bottom of the list.

In return for this responsibility, the party is entitled to all the treasure in the burrows, with the sole exception of the diamond in this room, which the halflings keep to provide for their material needs. Actually, the halflings treat the diamond with almost superstitious veneration; they fight to keep it if necessary. Of course, the PCs do not have to accept Burton's offer, but if they decline, the sheriff tells his people not to help the party in any way. In the end, the PCs are

going to have a much tougher time without the aid of the halflings.

If the party does accept, Burton bestows the ceremonial necklace of office (worth 100 gp) on the chosen PC just before he expires. The halflings then follow the directions of the new sheriff—within reason. They start with a 60% loyalty base, plus the new sheriff's charisma bonus. If their loyalty falls below 26%, they elect their own sheriff and leave the party in disgust.

**N11. Escape Tunnel.** This tunnel emerges in a hidden hollow in the bushes north of the pine tree.

There are four hunting parties out in the garden, composed of five halflings each. One halfling returns each day.

All the halflings are proficient climbers and trackers (as 1st-level thief and ranger respectively) from two decades of hunting in the garden. They are also proficient in the use of harpoons and small boats. They know the best way to get across the pond (area Q) without falling prey to winds or monsters, and the best way to hunt the fish (they harpoon them and tow them ashore). The halflings have discovered a hidden route up the fountain, one that greatly increases the chance of surviving the climb—though they haven't ventured up there in many years. They can also equip the party with rope, tools, and supplies, not to mention combat assistance. In other words, their help may make the difference between success and failure for the party.

Every day the PCs wait in the halflings' lair, there is a 20% chance that a group of 11-20 **gnolls** (hp 9 each) attacks, attempting to breach the outer defenses and plunder the burrows.

**O. Wasp Holes.** There are five cunningly hidden holes here (detected on a 2-in-6 chance by most PCs; 4 in 6 by elves, half-elves, and rangers of any race). Three of the holes contain paralyzed creatures, food for the baby wasps that will hatch in 1-3 days. The first hole contains a wolf spider, the second a gnoll, and the third a young female **noncombatant halfling** named Tara (hp 2) who wears a 50-gp bracelet. She happens to be the niece of Burton the Sheriff (area N), and the whole tribe would be very grateful if she was returned to them (+5% to loyalty).

Unless cured with a *neutralize poison, heal,* or similar spell, the paralyzed creatures die within a week.

**P. Swamp.** This low area has become especially waterlogged during the rainy weather. Water from the overflowing pond passes through the area in a 6'-deep, swift-flowing stream. In other places, the water is between 2'-5' deep, though there are occasional dry patches. Clumps of grass grow out of the water in places, making the area look like a mangrove swamp.

At the point where the stream passes through the wall, water collects in a pool and flows out through a 20'-wide gap in the collapsed stonework. Beyond, the stream falls 100' down a steep, undercut bank to the river below. From far to the east, the colossal roar of the waterfall can be heard.

At the bottom of the pool something gleams faintly. It is a normal-size *ring of telekinesis* with 37 charges. This ring weighs 100 lbs. and is over 4' in diameter. **A water beetle** (hp 21) lies in wait at the bottom of the pool.

**Q. Pond.** To the diminutive adventurers, the pond appears to be a wind-tossed lake, largely obscured by vast patches of floating algae. Occasionally, a monstrous wake appears, a fin the size of a rowboat breaks the surface, and the huge fish sinks back into the depths. Six **fish** (hp 43 each) live in the pond. The murky water is 75' deep. Far out in the center of the lake rises an imposing tower of white marble: the fountain.

Improvised boats are plentiful—old leaves, for example—but they can be propelled at only a 15' per round movement rate, and there is a 5% chance per round that they capsize. The halflings (area N) can paddle their own boats at 45' per round, while PCs without seamanship proficiencies can propel the same boats at only 30' per round. The halflings hunt the fish by harpooning them with two harpoons, then hauling them in from shore. It takes a team with 90 combined strength points to pull a fish all the way onto dry land.

Anyone swimming underwater or walking on the bottom has a 25% chance to notice a normal-size amethyst lying half buried in the mud. There are five such gems in the pond, each worth 400 gp. They are too heavy for a diminutive character to move.

**R. The Fountain.** The fountain towers 200' above the surface of the pond. From afar, its marble surface appears to be smooth, but as it is approached, hundreds of small pits and cracks become evident. Some are as large as caves and could provide shelter for diminutive travelers. The fountain can be climbed only by thieves, at a 12' movement rate per round and -5% to the attempt due to gusting winds. There is one hidden route up the fountain on the east side, however, that can be detected as a secret door. This route gives a thief +10% to his chance to climb and allows other classes a 50% chance to climb successfully.

The fountain is composed of three levels or tiers. The first tier has a 20'-wide crack in the northern side, so the basin at that level is empty and dry.

The second tier of the fountain is surrounded by four stone gargoyle heads. A 5'-diameter pipe leads from the basin to each head. When the fountain is working, water flows out through the gargoyles' mouths to the lower basin. In the northern pipe lives an old **wolf spider** (hp 21).

The western pipe is blocked with dead leaves. If anyone removes this plug, the water trapped behind it roars down the pipe, carrying that character with it. This unfortunate person must make a dexterity check to avoid falling 100' to the tier below.

The inside of the second tier basin contains 10' of stagnant water. The *sphere of diminution,* a 15'-diameter globe of very thick glass, lies nearly submerged, draped with weeds. Near it are two normal-size black pearls worth 1,000 gp each and an normal-size pale blue rhomboidal *ioun stone* (+1 to strength). The remains of wadded cotton and cloth that once covered and protected the sphere lie on the bottom of the pool.

There are several ways to destroy the sphere. All require a certain amount of imagination on the players' part (here's where the problem solving comes in). Experience-point awards of up to 400 xp may be awarded for creative ideas, at the DM's discretion. Here are a few ideas:

—The sphere can be broken with brute force or spells. The sphere has 6 structural points. In order to do 1 point of structural damage to the sphere, a single physical blow must do 12 hp damage or more. If 24 hp are inflicted by a single blow, the sphere loses 2 structural

points, and so on. The sphere takes no damage from physical attacks doing less damage. It takes half damage from cold, fire, and electricity (magical or otherwise). A *dispel magic* spell or *wand of negation* have no effect on it. If the PCs wish to hit the sphere, they must have some sort of platform to stand on (a raft, for example).

—The sphere may be dropped over the edge of the basin onto the first tier 100' below. To do this, the 1,000-lb. sphere must first be hoisted up to the edge of the basin. Ropes tied around it may be used to pull it up; this takes 180 total strength points without a pulley. The halflings in area N can make a pulley that increases lifting power by a factor of six. With this pulley, only 30 strength points are required to lift the sphere. Alternatively, the PCs can attach the sphere to floats and block up the gargoyles' mouths, then wait for rain to fill up the basin so they can push the sphere over the edge. When dropped, the glass sphere must save vs. fall (see the *DMG*, page 80), with a +1 modifier because it is falling only two objective feet. If the save fails, the sphere breaks. Even if the save succeeds, the sphere takes 0-5 (1d6–1) structural points of damage.

—Once on the lower level, the sphere can be tied to floats and rolled into the pond. It can then be navigated (with luck) through area P and dropped into the river, which carries it to the waterfall. There it is smashed to pieces on the rocks below (with no saving throw).

If the players just aren't the problem-solving kind, don't be too hard on them. The object, after all, is to have fun and perhaps test their minds, not to frustrate or (horrors) bore them. If they have no idea what to do, give them clues through an NPC or scrawled graffiti on a wall.

To keep the PCs on their toes, every day they tarry on the fountain produces a 50% chance of encountering one of a great number of wolf spiders that roam the fountain seeking prey.

## Concluding the Adventure

As soon as the *sphere of diminution* is broken, diminutive creatures and objects begin to grow to their natural sizes. This takes three rounds. During this period, everyone living underground frantically scrambles to get outside to avoid being squeezed to death in the tiny passages. Any diminutive objects left behind grow until they fill their enclosures, then erupt out of the ground in showers of earth and rocks (each such item must save vs. normal blow or be destroyed, as per the *DMG*, page 80). Diminutive creatures who remain underground take 10-40 hp damage.

If the PCs are carrying natural-size items (Chadranther's solid-silver swords, for example, or the spider-silk rope from the halfling lair), these remain in their very tiny sizes. Most creatures in the area have almost no diminutive possessions. Thus, they are defenseless and unclothed when returned to full size (clothes burst off, causing no damage).

Most of the diminutive creatures were born that way (though they still count as diminutive), and when they grow to their natural size they are frightened and confused. The goblin tribe exits the wayhouse and runs screaming into the hills, taking its treasure along. Chadranther's people walk here and there in a daze, not comprehending what has happened. The grugach elves (area H) leave the area at once. The gnolls (area L) attack the halflings and perhaps the party. Aubrey the minstrel (see encounter tables) attacks the gnolls. Marlowe (area M) throws himself to the ground and sing paeans of joy to his deity. The kobolds (see encounter tables) attack everyone. The halflings (area N) defend themselves. In this confusion, Chadranther makes a final effort to annihilate the party.

**Recovering treasure.** All significant treasure found in this adventure is given in the Treasure At The Wayhouse table. Some of this treasure may be destroyed as it grows. Some may be the personal property of a creature who fights, if necessary, to keep it. Finally, some of the treasure is underground or underwater and is hidden from sight. If the PCs have already encountered an item of treasure, they can return to claim it automatically. If they are just searching around, they find three randomly selected items the first day, one item the next, and 0-1 items every day thereafter. A *detect magic* spell automatically detects all magical items in the area, however.

If the PCs have assumed responsibility for the halflings, the adventurers are immediately beset with demands to

### Treasure At The Wayhouse

| Area | Treasure |
|---|---|
| Living area | *Leather armor +2*[3], 11 citrines[3] (50 gp each), potion of *climbing*[3], two suits of high-quality chain mail |
| Goblins' lair | 17 pp, three cloaks[2] (80 sp each), 615 gp, 750 sp, potion of *extra healing*, ivory bracelet (600 gp) |
| Under floor | Three tokens[1] (50 gp each), two diamonds[1] (100 gp each), clerical scroll[1] (*augury, neutralize poison, glyph of warding*), silver footman's flail (20 gp) |
| Area D3 | Ring[3] (75 gp) |
| Area D5 | Belt[3] (500 gp), 2 sp |
| Area D8 | Garnet[3] (150 gp) |
| Area D9 | 1-20 gp |
| Area D10 | Diamond[3] (200 gp) |
| Area D11 | Two bales silk (25 gp each), 10 pelts (5 sp each), 50 plates[2] (2 gp each), six jugs[2] (20 gp each), two red dragon skulls[2] (250 gp each), mirror (25 gp), 1,750 gp, 2,000 sp |
| Area D12 | Five garnets[1] (200 gp each), ring[1] (1 gp), *ring of protection +2*[3], potions of *healing* and *speed*[3], spell books |
| Area E | 400 gp[3] |
| Garden encounters | 2-8 gp (gnolls), 20-gp silver earring (kobolds), 750-gp lute (minstrel), potion of *heroism* (orcs) |
| Area F | Two bracers[1] (200 gp), scroll[1] (*protection from undead*), map |
| Area G | 12 *arrows +2*[3], 173 gp[3] |
| Area H | Potion of *water breathing*[3], *elven chain mail +1*[3] |
| Area I | *Oil of timelessness*[1] |
| Area J | *Jewel of flawlessness*[1] |
| Area K | 100 pp[1], 120 gp[1], diamond[1] (500 gp), potion of *climbing*[2] |
| Area L | *Incense of obsession*[3] |
| Area N2 | 42 pp[1] |
| Area N4 | *Broad sword +2*[3], 5 pp[3], 5 pearls[3] (150 gp each) |
| Area N7 | Six paintings (100 gp each), map |
| Area N8 | 150' spider-silk rope |
| Area N9 | 912 gp, 696 ep, 620 sp, *ring of free action*, magical bug-killing flute[2], globe[2] (300 gp; remember gas cloud!) |
| Area N10 | Diamond (3,000 gp) |
| Area O | Bracelet (50 gp)[3] |
| Area P | *Ring of telekinesis*[1] |
| Area Q | Five amethysts[1] (400 gp each) |
| Area R | Two pearls[1] (1,000 gp each), *ioun stone*[3] |

[1]Item is hidden from view.
[2]Item is destroyed when orb is destroyed.
[3]Personal possession (carried by a being).

escort the small folk to their home far to the south. At most, the halflings—grudgingly—allow the party to spend three days searching for treasure. This journey could provide further material for adventure, perhaps resulting in a reward for restoring the halfling clan's long-lost cousins to them.

If the PCs later return to the way-house, they find the area stripped of treasure by the former residents and traveling bandits. Following these individuals to gain the remaining treasure could lead to yet another adventure. Ω

## Combined Monster/NPC Statistics Chart

| | AC | MV | HD (level) | #AT | THAC0 | Dmg | Size[1] | AL | Location | Reference | Special |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Normal-Size Creatures** | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Ant, warrior | 3 | 12 | 2 | 1 | 19 | 2-5 | S | N | random, area I | invented | acid spray[2] |
| Ant, worker | 3 | 12 | 1 | 1 | 19 | 1-3 | S | N | random, area I | invented | herd aphids |
| Aphid | 6 | 9 | ½ | nil | nil | nil | S | N | random | invented | produce intoxicating liquid |
| Beetle | 4 | 6 | 2 | 1 | 19 | 1-6 | S | N | random | invented | |
| Beetle, water | 4 | 12 | 3 | 1 | 17 | 1-6 | M | N | area P | invented | |
| Caterpillar | 7 | 9 | 2 | nil | nil | nil | M | N | random | invented | |
| Centipede | 7 | 18 | 2 | 1 | 19 | 1-3 | S | N | random, area N2 | invented | poison[3] |
| Fish | 5 | 18 | 8 | 1 | 13 | 1-10 | H | N | random, area Q | invented | swallow prey whole[4] |
| Horse | — | — | — | — | — | — | G | N | area C | invented | |
| Orc | — | — | — | — | — | — | G | LE | random | invented | |
| Praying mantis | 4 | 6/9 | 3+3 | 3 | 17 | 2-5/2-5/1-4 | H | N | random | invented | surprise on 1-5 |
| Rat | 6 | 21 | 3+3 | 1 | 17 | 2-8 | H | N | under floor, random, areas C, D3, G | invented | |
| Snake | 5 | 21 | 8 | 1 | 13 | 2-24 | G | N | random, area K | invented | poison[5] |
| Spider, web | 6 | 9 | 2+2 | 1 | 19 | 1-3 | S | N | random | invented | web, poison[6] |
| Spider, wolf | 5 | 12 | 3 | 1 | 17 | 1-6 | M | N | random, areas O, R | invented | poison[7], surprise on 1-5 |
| Tick | 4 | 6 | ½ | 1 | 20 | 1 | S | N | random | invented | blood drain[8] |
| Wasp | 4 | 9/24 | 2 | 1 | 19 | 1-6 | M | N | random | invented | poison[9] |
| Weasel | 4 | 21 | 8+4 | 1 | 13 | 1-6 | G | N | random, area F | invented | |
| **Diminutive Beings** | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Elf, grugach | 5 | 15 | (F1) | 1 | 20 | BWT[10] | M | CN | area H | MM2/63 | |
| Elf, grugach leader | 4 | 15 | (F3) | 1 | 19 | BWT | M | CN | area H | MM2/63 | |
| Gnoll | 5 | 9 | 2 | 1 | 19 | BWT | L | CE | random, areas D10, L, M, N11, O | MM1/46 | |
| Gnome | 5 | 6 | (F1) | 1 | 20 | BWT | S | any evil | area N | MM1/46 | |
| Goblin, male | 6 | 6 | 1-1 | 1 | 20 | BWT | S | LE | Living area, goblin lair | MM1/47 | |
| Goblin, bodyguard | 5 | 6 | 1 | 1 | 19 | BWT | S | LE | Living area | MM1/47 | |
| Goblin, female & young | 10 | 6 | ½ | nil | nil | nil | S | LE | Goblin lair | MM1/47 | |
| Halfling, male | 7 | 6 | (0) | 1 | 20 | BWT | S | LG | random, areas N8, N10, N11 | MM1/50 | |
| Halfling, noncombatant | 10 | 6 | (0) | nil | nil | nil | S | LG | N10 | MM1/50 | |
| Human, warrior | Var. | Var. | (F1) | 1 | 20 | BWT | M | LE | random, areas C, D, D7, D8, D9, G | | |
| Human, noncombatant | 10 | 12 | (0) | 1 | 20 | BWT | S-M | LE | area D4 | | |
| Kobold | 7 | 6 | ½ | 1 | 20 | BWT | S | LE | random | MM1/57 | |
| Orc | 6 | 9 | 1 | 1 | 19 | BWT | M | LE | random | MM1/76 | |

[1]In comparison to diminutive PCs (subjective scale). The size categories are: S = small (2.1-4'), M = man-size (4.1-7'), L = large (7.1'-12'), H = huge (12.1-25'), G = gargantuan (25.1'+) as per AD&D 2nd Edition rules.
[2]Once every four rounds, 10' distance, 1-8 hp damage.
[3]Save vs. poison or take 4-32 hp damage.
[4]When attack causes more than 7 hp damage (save vs. petrification to avoid being swallowed). Swallowed victims take 5 hp acid damage per round thereafter.
[5]Save vs. poison or take 10-80 hp damage.
[6]Save vs. poison or take 1-10 hp damage and be paralyzed for 1-3 days.
[7]Save vs. poison or take 2-20 hp damage.
[8]For four rounds after successful attack, for 1 hp damage per round.
[9]Save vs. poison or be paralyzed for one week, after which time victim dies unless cured.
[10]By weapon type.

**Note:** Normal-size horses and orcs are so vast in subjective terms that they have meaningless scores for armor class, movement, hit dice, etc. See "The Stable" (area C) and "The Garden" ("Random Encounter Notes," under "Visitors") for details on handling normal-size horses and orcs, respectively.

(continued from page 17)

A character may hold his breath for a number of rounds equal to 1/3 of his constitution score, rounded up. If the unfortunate fellow didn't have a chance to take a deep breath, this time is cut in half. Strenuous activity, such as combat, cuts the time in half yet again, so a character in this situation may hold his breath only 1/4 as long as normal. Anyone can hold his breath for one full round, regardless of penalties.

Once a character runs out of air, he is in danger of drowning. He must roll his constitution score or lower on 1d20 for every round he is underwater. For the first round, this is rolled at no penalty, but for each additional round, a cumulative penalty of +2 is added to each check. If the character fails a roll, he passes out and drowns unless rescued immediately.

An additional problem for rapidly ascending characters is what Kilinin calls "diver's syndrome." This is *nitrogen narcosis,* or "the bends," caused by a build-up of bubbles of nitrogen in the bloodstream from working at depths below 30' for long periods of time. Kilinin was fortunate to find a mention of this effect during his research before building the diving bell, thus saving himself and others from discovering it the hard way.

A controlled descent to the deepest part of the lake (120') in the *Postern-1* takes a little over 25 minutes, as the gnomes stop the descent every 33' or so to allow the air-to-water-pressure ratio to be adjusted. A controlled ascent from the deepest area of the lake takes 130 minutes. Stops are made at 30' for 19 minutes, 20' for 37 minutes, and 10' for 74 minutes, (measured using an hourglass). These stops allow natural decompression and prevent the bends. The maximum time allowed for working in the *Postern-1* at 120' down is 90 minutes, if the crew is not to spend too much time decompressing before returning to the surface. The DM need not play through the decompression time; if no interesting events occur, the ascent can be described briefly before moving on in the game.

Anyone unlucky enough to come up to the surface more quickly than this may suffer the following symptoms: pains in the joints and limbs, pain in the stomach, headache and dizziness, paralysis, and a strange combination of euphoria and poor judgment, lasting 24 hours.

In game terms, a character taking 3/4 or less of the required time to ascend has a 90% chance of contracting any or all of the above. He must make a saving throw vs. death ray at +4 or die if brought directly to the surface in 10 minutes or less. Even if he saves, there is a 50% chance of any paralysis being permanent unless a *cure disease* or *heal* spell is cast on him within 24 hours.

No elaborate furnishings exist within the bell, as it doesn't require them. Three man-size creatures may be accommodated within it—five gnomish or smaller ones. Two simple ledges form seats for use while the craft ascends and descends, and rope handholds are used to prevent the crew from falling out through the open floor when sudden stops become necessary (for example, when decompressing on the way up).

It is usual for materials to be stored in net bags that hang from simple hooks on the inner hull. These can easily be removed to allow for more room for other (PC) gear. Digging tools, food, and bags are often kept here.

Communication with the surface is possible by tugging on a thin cord that travels up through the air line. The following system of tugs is used by the gnomes:

| | |
|---|---|
| One tug | Monster present! |
| Two tugs | Everything is fine. |
| Three tugs | Prepare to be hauled up (or Haul me up). |
| Four tugs | More air! |

More tugs than this indicate either that a gnome is entangled in the cord, or (as often occurs) that a gnome is panicking while being attacked by the giant pike. The PCs may wish to add to this list to communicate additional messages with the gnomes controlling the *Postern-1*. Ω

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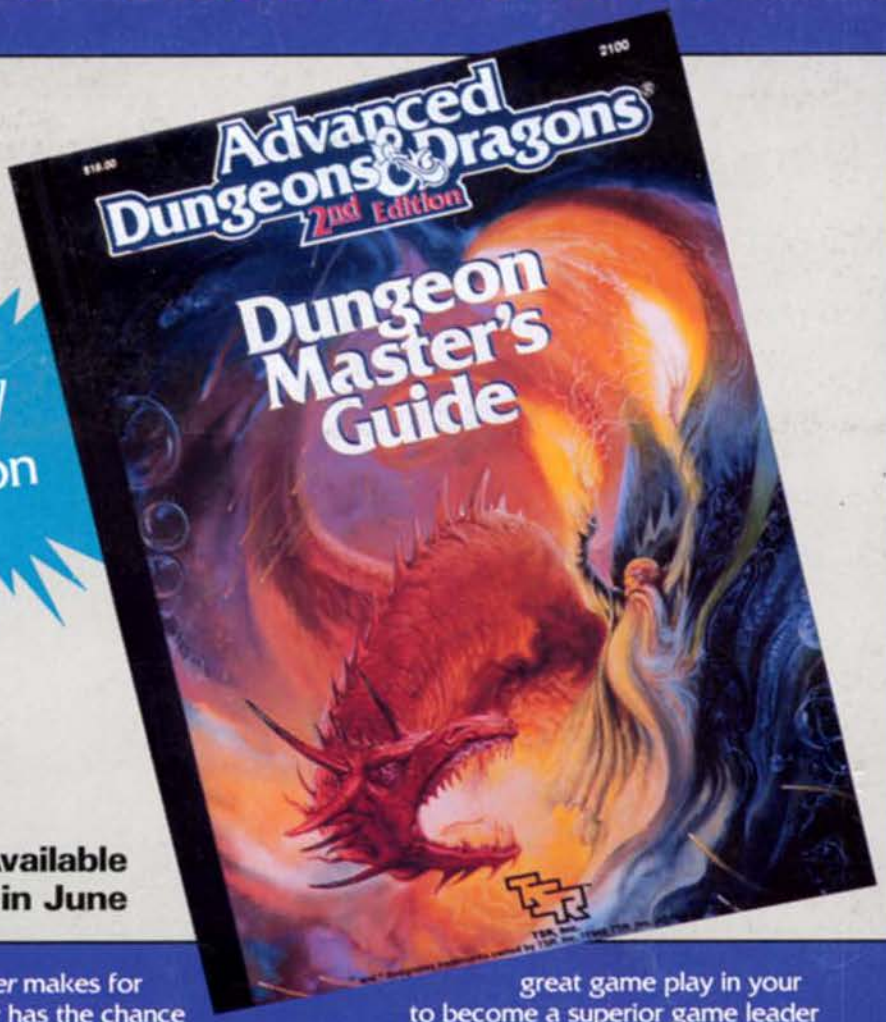


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